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The
Governor's Reverie
and Other Stories

FRANK S. SULLIVAN

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The Governor's Reberie

The Governor's Reverie

AND OTHER STORIES

—BY—

FRANK S. SULLIVAN

PRICE, \$1.25, POSTPAID

CRANE & COMPANY, PUBLISHERS
TOPEKA, KANSAS
1916

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To
WILLIAM J. DUVAL ("BILLY-JOE")

THIS LITTLE VOLUME IS
AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

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Preface

THESE stories are selected almost at random from a hundred the author has written during the last twenty years. They were written primarily for my own amusement. Sometimes the tedious hours of a rainy day were made tolerable by this employment. Often I would see the characters pictured in the smoke-wreaths of an after-supper cigar, and would weave them into a story before sleeping. Occasionally I have awakened with the tangled threads of a hazy dream dangling indistinctly before my mental vision, and, finding a return to sleep impossible, would arise, and soon the stillness of the night would be broken by the click of my typewriter as I pounded the fragmentary impressions into a semblance of form.

Few of these stories have been read by anyone; only one has been published heretofore; two or three I have submitted to competent critics, who damned them with faint praise.

I do not know whether these stories are good or bad; neither do I care what the critics say of them, for in the final analysis it is not the critic, but the reading public, whom the author must

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please, and I should like to know what the great body of readers think of these children of my fancy; and I will take it as a great favor if every reader of this book will write me a personal letter, telling me in plain, ungarnished English just what he thinks of it.

Very sincerely yours,

FRANK S. SULLIVAN,

December, 1916.

Meade, Kansas.

The Governor's Reverie

The inaugural ceremonies had taken place at the Capitol Building at high noon ; the reception was held at the Governor's mansion in the evening. There was present the pomp and the glory of the capital city and of the state ; statesmen, politicians, the omnipresent place-hunter, the gallants and butterflies of society. But the evening's revelry was now ended, the last delighted guest had departed, and the Governor, lighting a cigar, reclined in an easy chair with his feet elevated, his hands clasped behind his head in perfect abandon, and held sweet communion with his own thoughts. His had been a meteoric career ; he was unmarried, was at that age when most men have just commenced to achieve success, and was the youngest man who had ever occupied the executive chair of the commonwealth. His gaze roved around the luxurious apartment illuminated by a hundred incandescents, and he smiled a smile of self-satisfaction ; perhaps self-laudation might have been excusable, but he was no egotist. His success and honors had not come by chance or accident, but were the result of his

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indomitable will, relentless energy, native ability, and persistent endeavor. He looked forward to four years as Governor, then to the senatorial toga, from thence to a place in the Cabinet; even the Presidency itself was not inaccessible to him. He mentally reviewed his career from the time when, as a penniless and briefless barrister he had started forth with a determination to surmount all obstacles that might lie between him and his career; and then his mind reverted to the scenes of his childhood in the little country town where he was born and reared, and the smile of self-complacency faded and was succeeded by an expression of wistful, pensive longing for something missing from his eventful life.

From many scenes recalled, one lingered with him more distinct, more vivid, more dear, than all others. He saw himself, a brown-handed, sun-tanned boy of twelve in a blackberry patch on a summer afternoon, and near him stood a bewitching maiden of summers ten and of the size of an angel child, a wind-blown curl of flaxen caressing her cheek, her fingers and lips stained with the juice of the berry; he saw the boy glance covertly around, and observing that none were near to see, he clasped the fairy maid, and, unmindful of her struggles, pressed her kiss-fond lips with

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his, and when she was released from his ardent embrace he heard her exclaim in anger, "Why, Willie Brown! I hate you! Never speak to me again!" And she vanished from his presence as moonbeam fairies disappear at the approach of dawn.

Five years passed by; long, dreary years they were, time passes so slowly at that age; he had graduated from the high school at the head of his class, and was about to leave the little town to enter college. The pang of parting with boyhood friends, from dear familiar scenes, was somewhat tempered by the prospect of new adventures, new acquaintances, new worlds to conquer. He took a farewell plunge in the old swimming-hole; he trod once more the well-worn paths to his favorite haunts in woodland glens; with the memory of that other scene, of that first kiss, he visited the blackberry patch, to live over again in fancy that exquisite moment when his lips pressed hers. And there he found her, not the same little girl, but a maiden whom five years had matured into a suggestion of womanhood; but her fingers and lips were again stained as of old, and, no doubt by accident, she was standing in almost the exact spot where she had stood when he kissed her so

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long ago, oh, ages ago. Unmindful of his proximity she stood among the berry blooms, "the fairest blossom of them all," the breezes flirting with her tresses, an expression of dreamy reminiscence on her lovely face. Whether her surprise were real or affected we can never know, but she appeared startled when she saw him, and the telltale blushes mantled cheek and brow when he addressed her, saying :

"Genevieve, do you remember the time so long ago when we were here together, and I kissed you? You were standing about where you now stand, the same curl was playing hide-and-seek with your dimples, your lips were berry-stained, as they now are, and I was seized with an irresistible impulse, as I am now seized——"

"William," she exclaimed, "don't you dare try to kiss me!"

"Suppose I should dare; what would be the penalty?" he asked.

"I would box your ears," she rejoined.

"It is worth the price," he cried, and she was again in his arms and he kissed her, and received a box on the ears from a hand smoother than which velvet was never woven, whereupon he kissed her again and religiously turned the other

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cheek that she might smite him once again, which she did.

The years went by, more swiftly now, and again he returned to the old town with his college degree and his license to practice law, and the memory of the maid and of the stolen kisses. He visited the old blackberry patch ; but the berries were less sweet, the sun less bright, the birds sang less gayly, the flowers were less odorous, the breeze sighed plaintively through the leaves as though breathing a requiem to sweet memories ; she was not there. Sadly he turned and slowly left the place, feeling that the sky was grey, the world bare, and life but a bitter disappointment. The path that he chose to tread led by her father's house, and in passing he saw her, and, strange coincidence, she must have just returned from the blackberry patch, for her fingers were stained and on her lips were the berries' telltale marks. After friendly though restrained greetings he had said :

"I have just been out to the old berry patch, but it has changed very much ; I could not locate the spot where we stood a hundred years ago when you boxed my ears, and where on a time long prior to that you told me you hated me. But I can see

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you still ; your lips were stained just as they now are, and you looked just as you now look except that you have changed from girlish grace to the beauty of glorious womanhood, and the same irresistible impulse with which the sight of berry stains always moves me impels me to repeat the offense I have heretofore committed, even at the risk of being tried, convicted and punished for grand larceny, of which I would assuredly be guilty."

He advanced toward her, but paused awkwardly and irresolutely when she repulsed him with a glance, and said :

"Mr. Brown, your reminiscences are entirely out of place and your conduct is very unbecoming a gentleman. I positively forbid you to approach nearer."

"And suppose I choose to ignore your inhibition, what is to be the penalty?" he asked.

"I will scream, sir!" she rejoined.

It was not fear of her screams that held him at bay ; it was not timidity, it was not——. But he never knew why his courage failed him. He was too deficient in the psychology of love to know that the years of maturity had protected her with a shield of modesty which required stronger shafts than those of impulse to penetrate. It was

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the only time in all his career that he faltered or held back, or desisted from going after what he desired ; but desist he did, and shortly thereafter bade her adieu and departed, feeling that he was a coward, feeling ashamed of his cowardice, and yet somehow consciously pleased that he had lacked the courage, or arrogance he now preferred to call it, to execute the impulse by which he was moved.

He saw her no more, and in a few days he again left the village of his nativity to take up the business of life in a distant city, with a firm determination that when he had achieved a proper measure of success he would return to her, and for her, and claim her as his own. And he dreamed of a vine-covered cottage with lattice work over the window through which the sunlight would fall checkered, of a blackberry patch near by, and always of her with stained fingers and lips and a loosened curl caressing a dimple.

Time passed. Success came slowly, but ever his face turned toward the clouds, and ever in the clouds he saw the reflection of a blackberry patch and an image of an angel face with a wind-blown curl, with eyes of a blue, blue-black like the ripe berry, and lips of a redder red than the berry stain, and then——

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One day he read in the village paper an announcement of her marriage to the plodder of his high school class, and the vision in the clouds faded away, and thereafter he saw only visions of gold and glory and renown, and these he had achieved. But his life was incomplete.

A long-drawn whistle, and then another and yet another sounded in the distance; the Governor rubbed his eyes, glanced at the clock on the mantel and noted that the hour was seven. "Well," he remarked to himself. "I must have fallen asleep in my chair; these late hours will never do for an old codger like me; I will not be in fit condition to work today, and I need to exercise my best faculties, as there are important matters to be considered."

The Governor yawned, and then——

"Hell!" he exclaimed; "for just one kiss from a pair of berry-stained lips I'd chuck the whole game."

Although Governor, he was still a man.

An Indian Story

"O, Uncle!" cried little Amy Merton, as a group of children came up to where Uncle Andy was enjoying his pipe in the shade of a spreading cottonwood, on a warm summer afternoon, "We've been looking everywhere for you; we want you to tell us a story."

"Yes," added Anna, "tell us a story we have never heard."

"Tell us a story about bears and wolves," said Robert.

"I'd rather hear one about Indians," added James.

"Well, children," said Uncle Andy, taking the pipe from his mouth and knocking the ashes out against his boot-heel, "sit down and be quiet and I'll tell you a story, a true story, too, one that you have never heard, and one which, I think, relates the most exciting adventure of my life. There are no bears in it, a few wolves, although these played a very minor part; but there were plenty of Indians, too many, and they were very conspicuous."

Uncle Andy carefully and leisurely refilled and

The Governor's Reverie, and Other Stories

lighted his pipe, and smoked a few moments in silence, collecting the tangled threads of the story before commencing to narrate, while the children seated themselves in a circle around him and waited patiently for him to proceed.

Their uncle had led an adventurous life, and never failed to have an interesting story to relate when they came to visit him ; but they knew that he would take his time about beginning, and that the story would be worth waiting for, so they sat in silence until Uncle Andy had smoked himself into the proper condition of mind for story-telling.

"You know, children," Uncle Andy commenced, "times have changed a great deal since I was a young man. Then we had no flying machines, no automobiles, no telephones, and mighty few railroads and telegraphs in the West, where I have always lived. The swiftest method we had then of getting over the ground was on the back of a broncho, and the old stage-coach was the customary method of travel for those who did not go horseback.

"In the year 1867, when this adventure happened to me, I had a contract with the government to supply meat for the soldiers stationed at Fort Sill. And I want to say that those soldiers had the most voracious appetites of any animals I

An Indian Story

have ever seen. Nothing but buffalo meat, and only the choicest cuts of that would suit them, and it kept me mighty busy supplying them. I had four men helping me, besides the cook. We had cleaned up all the buffalo within a radius of twenty miles from the Fort, and it was no small job to go the distance we had to go to find game, kill it, dress it, and get it back to the Fort before it spoiled. The Indians had become troublesome, too; but we were all young and reckless, all crack shots, and fear of the red men never entered our minds.

“Well, one particular day in the summer of 1867 we loaded up our chuck wagon with rations for a week and started out to replenish the commissary with buffalo meat. The bison seemed particularly scarce that day, and we drove all day and until almost dark before we saw any. Just about dark we made out a small herd about a mile beyond us, but knowing it would be no use to try to get any of them that night, we decided to go into camp and get an early start after them in the morning. We had ridden about forty miles that day over the jolting prairie; it was hot and dry, and we were all tired out completely, and after a hasty supper we rolled in our blankets, for the nights on the high prairie were always

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cool, no matter how hot the day had been, and using our saddles for pillows were all soon asleep.

"I awoke long before daylight next morning, and not caring to waken the boys so early, I thought I would ride out in the direction of the buffalo and get them located, after which I would return to camp, have breakfast, and take the boys directly to where the buffalo were grazing, kill as many as we could, and maybe get started back with the meat that evening.

"I rode out about two miles, and when I got on the summit of a slight elevation—it was just getting good daylight—I saw about a half mile beyond me what appeared to be the carcass of a buffalo, with several coyotes feeding on it; but there were no live buffalo in sight. I rode up to the carcass, the coyotes scampering away as I approached, and found that it was as I thought, a dead buffalo, but what surprised me was that it had been killed by arrows, proving that it was the work of Indians. I did not know that there were any Indians that close to the Fort; and while I was surprised, yet I felt no particular uneasiness.

"I decided to ride on and see if I could learn what had become of the remainder of the herd. I hardly expected to find any of them within

An Indian Story

miles of that place, as this one had clearly been killed the night before while we were sleeping, and I had no doubt that the Indians had run all the others out of the country. What was my surprise then, when, on coming to the edge of a small arroya a half mile further on, I discovered thirteen buffalo drinking at a pool in the bottom of the ravine. They saw me about the time I saw them and immediately took flight down the cañon. I hastily unslung my Winchester and opened fire, dropping two in their tracks and knocking another to his knees. This last one was the biggest buffalo I ever saw, and I was very anxious to bag him. He remained on his knees but an instant, and then started up the side of the hill with a speed I have never seen equaled by anything on feet. I fired three more shots at him before he got out of sight over the hill, but either missed him or failed to strike a vital spot, as he never faltered, but I think ran all the faster. I started in pursuit, but although I was riding the fastest mustang I ever bestrode, I never got within shooting distance of him again, although I chased him for more than two miles before I finally lost him. The country was very rough here, and I thought he must have become weak from loss of blood and lay down somewhere in the high grass,

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and so I rode round for an hour or more looking for him, before I finally decided to give him up and return to camp for breakfast.

“But, now, imagine my surprise and chagrin when I found that I was completely lost. It is not often that an old plainsman gets lost on the prairie; but then, this was not exactly prairie, for, as I have said, the country into which I had ridden was quite broken. Then, too, it was cloudy; try as I would I could not locate the sun, although it must have been three or four hours high. I had no compass, and I had absolutely no idea of direction. I tried to retrace my steps, but the grass was so rank and the ground so hard that I could not follow my trail. I then determined to ride to the top of the highest hill and look around; perhaps I could see some of the other boys, who might have come out to look for me; I was certain they would be out if they had heard my shots. Accordingly, I rode to the top of a high hill, but could see nothing but other hills, grass, sage brush and mesquite. I fired two shots from my rifle, thinking to attract the attention of my men if any of them were in hearing distance, but to no purpose. My magazine was now empty, and when I went to reload I found that I had not brought my cartridge-belt along.

An Indian Story

“There was nothing to do but to ride, and trust to luck to lead me back to camp. I looked around, trying to determine which way to start, and saw to the left of me and about a mile away six horsemen approaching. I knew it could not be our party, because there were too many of them, and although they were too far distant for me to make out clearly, I felt instinctively that they were Indians, and not knowing whether they would be friendly inclined, and having nothing but an empty gun with which to defend myself should they prove hostile, I decided to ride the other way, and accordingly started, but had not gone far until I saw, ahead of me and approaching, ten more horsemen, whom I knew to be Indians. I was now between two fires so to speak, and so I turned and rode at right angles to the two bodies of Indians. Without appearing to notice them, I kept sight of both bodies, one out of the corner of each eye, and saw that they were quickening their speed and evidently intended to close in on me. I touched my broncho lightly with my spurs and he quickened his pace, and the Indians quickened theirs.

“I saw it was going to be a race between us, but, knowing the speed and mettle of my mustang, I was not afraid, as I felt sure I could outride any

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Indian on the plains. Accordingly I put my mount to his best licks, intending to show the redskins that I could ride away from them, and thus discourage them from further pursuit. But I soon saw that I was not riding away from them, but that on the contrary they were gaining upon me and getting closer every minute. I could not understand this at first, as my pony was clearly doing his best; but I soon saw how it was. I was riding over broken ground, more or less sandy, and covered principally with sage brush, while on each side of me was a divide, down which the Indians were riding over smooth buffalo grass. And what was my consternation to observe that the two divides converged, and must meet a mile or two ahead of me. If the Indians got to the point of convergence ahead of me my escape would be cut off, so there was nothing for me to do but to beat them there, and I did not doubt that once on good ground I would be able to outdistance them. And so I rode on my wild race for life. Presently the ground over which I was riding grew smoother and I observed with joy that I was slowly but surely gaining on my pursuers. I urged my horse to greater efforts, and presently emerged on to the divide a good two hundred yards ahead of the nearest Indian. I had now a

An Indian Story

straight, level prairie ahead of me as far as I could see, and I yelled tauntingly to the Indians, who answered me with their blood-curdling war-whoop. I was near enough to see their war-paint plainly and to make out to what tribe they belonged, and I knew that my only safety lay in outrunning them.

“It was fortunate for me that they were armed only with their native bows and arrows, as I was in easy gunshot of them, had they been provided with good rifles. And so I rode on, and the Indians after me, but try as I would I could not perceptibly increase the distance between us. I knew now that my horse had become fatigued in racing over the rough ground, and I wondered how long he could hold out. And so on and on we raced, keeping about the same distance apart, although some of the Indians not so well mounted as others had dropped behind.

“I do not know how far or how long we raced, as I took no account of time or space; but presently the buffalo grass began to give way to bunch grass and mesquite, the ground got rougher, my horse became unsteady, his speed slackened, and presently out of the mesquite brush fifty yards in front of me arose a band of fifty Indians, all hideous in their war-paint of red and black and yellow,

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and all yelling like demons. And there I was with a spent horse, and an empty rifle, miles and miles away from any white man, and surrounded with bloodthirsty, screaming savages, each determined that my scalp should hang at his girdle."

"O, Uncle," exclaimed Amy, "Did they kill you?"

"No, little girlie, they didn't kill me," he replied.

"Well, what happened next?" asked James.

"What happened next?" repeated Uncle Andy, "O, the next thing I knew I woke up and found that the camp cook had been calling me for breakfast."

Stung

Charles Godfrey Bartlett was probably the busiest man on train Number Seven-twenty-three as it rolled westward that day; there were other passengers aboard, perhaps three hundred or four hundred of them; ordinary travelers, tourists, captains of industry, statesmen, a special messenger from the President to the City of Mexico; but while these were engaged in the ordinary affairs of life, Charles Godfrey was engrossed in writing a book that should make him famous. He had commenced his literary career some three or four years prior, and while his earlier attempts had been marked by no greater degree of success than that which crowns the average young writer, his offerings having been usually returned by an unappreciative editor with the polite information that same was "unavailable," he had, within the past year been able to secure the acceptance of a half dozen of his short stories.

Feeling that he would meet with greater success by personal interviews with the august persons who control the destinies of young authors, he had, a few days before our story opens, packed

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his grip with manuscripts and gone to the metropolis to try the potency of face to face, heart to heart talks with those whom he would fain have become his publishers. His reception by the various editors upon whom he called, or with whom he attempted to secure an audience, was not the most hospitable or encouraging; but he had managed to dispose of two short stories, and had left the manuscript of a serial with a be-spectacled high-brow, who had promised an early reading.

As he was purchasing his return ticket the inspiration for his new book seized him, and, while he usually rode in the smoker, he felt he could not risk the constancy of his mood to abide with him until he reached home, and so he engaged reservations in a Pullman, and at the moment he is introduced to the reader we find him, coatless and perspiring, in his stateroom, with his seven-dollar suitcase across his knees for a desk, industriously writing.

Milepost after milepost flew by, station after station was passed, but he wrote on, page after page of such matter as falls only from the pen of a genius. But the enthusiasm of an author for, and application to his work must yield to other and grosser demands; and especially when the author is an athletic young man of twenty-seven,

Stung

the demands of his physical well being will assert themselves. Accordingly, on finishing the fourth chapter Charles Godfrey was conscious of an aching void under his belt that demanded his attention. Looking at his watch he discovered that the last call for luncheon had been made, and after a hasty toilet he proceeded to the dining car.

He found the diner almost deserted, and an obsequious waiter beckoned him to a seat at a table near the entrance. But Charles Godfrey had observed, seated alone at a table near the middle of the car, a vision that caused his pulse to quicken and his heart to flutter with anticipation. A lady, she could not have been more than two-and-twenty, and so much loveliness Charles Godfrey opined had never before been enveloped in one gown. He felt then and there that this was the one woman for whom he had been waiting and longing and dreaming. Accustomed to take opportunity by the forelock, he determined instantaneously to force her acquaintance, and, ignoring the bowing waiter, advanced and seated himself opposite his fairy. Scarcely had he done so, however, than he realized the impropriety of his unwarranted boldness, and his embarrassment was so great that he knew not what to do, or to say next. Ac-

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cordingly he sat quietly waiting for inspiration. It came in an unexpected manner. The lady had apparently not observed his intrusion, but, after studying him for a moment under long lashes, she raised her eyes and permitted her gaze to rest for an instant upon him; a light of recognition illumined her countenance and she addressed him, saying :

"Pardon me, but is not this Mr. Bartlett, the author?"

"Certain magazines," he replied, "have been kind enough to publish some of my poor work; but my standing in literature as yet is hardly such that I could have been brought to your notice."

"Modesty is becoming in anyone," she rejoined, "and is a quality of the truly great, whether that greatness has been acquired by the pen, the sword, or otherwise. But you see that I know you. I always consult the index of my favorite magazine, and if that issue contains nothing from your pen I am greatly disappointed."

"I thank you for those kind words, and I assure you they fill me with pride and a determination to do better work, so that when you do read my stories your disappointment will not be greater. But since you have recognized me, and

I have not the honor of your acquaintance, will you not——”

She pushed a dainty card across the table to him, on which was written in neat script the name, “Nellie Harris.”

“Nellie Harris!” he ejaculated. “Are you indeed the Nellie Harris who has given to literature the most beautiful gems that have appeared this generation, those poems that have touched the hearts of all who have read them, and about which critics rave?”

“I have written some rhymes,” she modestly confessed, “that my friends assure me are not without merit.”

“Miss Harris, I have long admired you for the sake of your literary attainments, longed to meet, to become acquainted with you; and now that I have met you I know that my longing was a premonition.”

“I do not know that I fully understand you, but I am very glad to have met you, and especially at this time, as I am traveling alone, and as I am rather gregarious by nature, what threatened to be a tiresome journey will prove a delightful one.”

At this juncture the waiter approached, and Charles Godfrey proceeded to order for himself

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and for his fair companion. He was not an epicure, he was not skilled in gastronomic science, but the fates were with him, and the dinner was not only elaborate but well chosen.

They talked of literature mostly. He discussed Dickens and Thackeray, Dumas, Hawthorne, and Poe; she discussed Chambers, O. Henry, Jack London, and Charles Godfrey Bartlett. Luncheon finished, they returned to the Pullman, and as he held open the door to his stateroom, he said:

"I am much interested, Miss Harris, in the stand you take concerning the decadence of modern literature. I am a student of the old school, and it seems to me that we writers of the present day are sadly degenerate, and it is encouraging to us of the present generation to have so able a defender as you. Won't you come in and continue the discussion where we can talk in privacy?"

To his infinite delight she assented.

"Now," she said, as soon as they were seated, "I know you want to smoke, so don't mind me; go ahead and light your cigar."

"If you are sure," he replied, "that it is not at all objectionable——"

"O, not at all! I rather like the fragrance of a good cigar, and enjoy so much seeing the smoke-wreaths curl; it looks so comfy and homelike."

He produced and lighted one of his favorite brand of cigars—three-for-a-quarter—and blew a succession of rings toward the ceiling to demonstrate his prowess.

“Do you know,” she continued, her eyes following the spirals of smoke, “I have been doing considerable thinking upon a subject all girls think about, and most of them talk about, and I have decided that the man who could make me happy as my husband must have certain habits, and be possessed of certain qualifications and attributes. For instance, he must smoke——”

“I am an inveterate smoker,” he interrupted.

“He must be a good judge of a cigar——”

“I am a connoisseur.”

“He must be brave——”

“I have a Carnegie medal at home.”

“He must be strong——”

“I played center on the College eleven.”

“He must be swift——”

“I was changed to half-back because of my speed.”

“He must be rich——”

“I will be rich when my new book is put on the market.”

“And he must be handsome.”

“I will consult a beauty specialist at once.”

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"Men are different from girls," she continued, ignoring his interruptions. "I hardly suppose you have ever given any thought to the future Mrs. Bartlett. I'll venture to say that you cannot now predict whether she will be blonde or brunette, rounded or slender, short or tall, fiery or demure. In short, I doubt if you have ever pictured, or even dreamed of her. Now, have you?"

"Have I pictured her? Have I dreamed of her? Why I have pictured her a thousand times; I have dreamed of her a million times at night, and have conjured her every appearance an infinite number of times in my day-dreams. Have I an idea what she is like? I know exactly what she is like. I can see her now" (with his eyes fixed on Miss Harris).

"O, if you have such a splendid and accurate vision of her, please tell me what she is like?"

"Vision is right. She is a blonde, natural, about five feet four or five inches in height, more or less, neither rounded nor slender, neither short nor tall, but as exquisitely and symmetrically proportioned as Venus modified to conform to the æsthetic standard of the twentieth century. She is one of those blondes who would make a

Stung

hermit forget his vows and go post-haste to the devil if it were not for her angelic purity.

Her brow is like the winnowed snow,
And yet more wondrous fair;
Like sunbeams spun in silky skein
Her wealth of golden hair.

The summer sky hath borrowed
From her eye its azure hue,
And crimson clouds at sunset
Reflect the roseate hue

Of cheeks, where dimples coyly play,
And hearts, entranced, fall in;
And all that's lovely is combined
In Beauty's paradigm.

And Cupid's bow, and rubies red
Cannot her lips excel;
And gifted speech cannot express
The love her kisses tell.

“Now, there you have her, or rather, I have her—to get; I can but feebly describe her; the lexicon would become impoverished before half her beauty were told; her loveliness is indescribable, inexpressible, incomparable; but I have a picture of her, if you would care to see it.”

“O, indeed! I should be delighted! I have heard of beauty personified, but never have I been permitted to feast my eyes upon such perfect

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loveliness as you assure me exists; I would love to see her picture."

"Then behold, and marvel that Nature could so nearly approach, could absolutely attain perfection in the creation of beauty and loveliness combined!" exclaimed he, as he thrust a small mirror before her eyes.

"Why, Mr. Bartlett!" she cried. "You have aroused my interest and curiosity to a remarkable degree, and you were joking all the time. Aren't you ever serious?"

"I am a very serious-minded person, and I am especially serious at this time. You are the lady of my dreams. I knew it the moment that I saw you. Why, look here! It must be true; you recognized me instantly; you could not have known how I looked merely by having read my stories, and my picture has never been published. You never before saw my face or my likeness, and yet you recognize me, even more fully than I did you, for while I knew that you were SHE, I had not the occult power of divining your name; but you have accomplished that. It is fate, assuredly fate! I wonder if there is a minister aboard, and whether the laws of this state require a marriage license?"

"I don't know," she replied, demurely; "I have had but little experience with the law. But let's talk of other matters. How do you manage to select such charming heroines for your stories, and how do you describe them so perfectly that one feels as though one has known and loved them always?"

"The answer is very simple: by dreaming of you. If my characters are charming and beautiful, and lovable, and pure, it is because you are always before me, waking or dreaming, and my creations are ennobled and glorified by reason of their being fashioned after you, although the imitation in every case is base. I have never before believed in affinities, or in spontaneous love. I have been trained to believe that love is a slow growth, a gradual realization of the fitness of one for another; but here I meet you unexpectedly, and my love for you springs from my soul like mushrooms springing from rich soil."

"Mushrooms," she rejoined, "are of quick growth, and correspondingly short lived. Is your love like unto mushrooms?"

"Do I like mushrooms? Yes, of course I do; and calf's brains, and steamed oysters, and frog's legs, and anything else that is delectable. But

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what of that? Do you take this for a cook's convention? It is a treatise on love I am giving you, not a lecture on domestic science."

"But, Mr. Bartlett, I don't want to talk of love."

"I don't ask you to talk; all I ask of you is to listen."

And she did listen, while he poured forth the well-springs of his heart, with frequent allusion to fate and affinity and nymphs and goddesses, until finally the station whistle sounded for her destination, and she apprised him that her journey was at an end.

"But I may come to see you, may I not?" he inquired.

"Y—yes, you may, if you wish."

"And in the meantime may I write you?"

"No; I would rather you would not write. You have hypnotized yourself into thinking you are in love with me—an absurd proposition. Before a week goes by you will have recovered from your hallucination. If you have not recovered fully in two weeks, you may come and see me."

"Then," he replied, "two weeks from this hour, that is to say, on the 29th of this month, at exactly three-thirty P. M., I will call on you, and for the

present must be content with helping you off the train."

They proceeded to the platform, and as the train came to a stop she descended the steps in advance of him. As she reached the last step a hearty voice rang out, "Hello, Little Girl!" and she was seized in a pair of strong arms and swung to the ground, when a pair of masculine lips imprinted a kiss where it would do the most good. Bartlett recognized in the assassin George Harris, a well known commercial traveler. The recognition was mutual, and Harris greeted him jovially.

"Why, Hello Bartlett! Getting off here? Let me present you to my wife. Mrs. Harris, my friend, Mr. Bartlett."

"O," she laughed gayly, "Mr. Bartlett and I are old friends, you might say. We happened to be seated at the same table at luncheon, and struck up an acquaintance. You must come to see me when in town, Mr. Bartlett, and we will finish our discussion of the relative merits of the literature of the present and the past generation. You'll come, won't you?"

"Be pleased to, I assure you!" he mumbled, and swung onto the railing as the train started.

He returned to his stateroom and picked up the

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scattered sheets of the book that should make him famous. What to him was fame now? He made a movement as if to tear the sheets of precious writing in shreds, thought better of it, and commenced writing furiously in Chapter V, preceding it with this couplet :

Of all sad words of tongue or pen
The saddest of these are Stung Again.

His Reward; an Epitaph

He was only a servant, the most menial of servants. He was not allowed to eat at his master's table, nor even to sleep under the roof that sheltered that stern person. This treatment to one of the big, wide West where "hired help" are almost universally treated as the employer's equal, did not tend to strengthen the ties of loyalty between master and servant. But he would have borne uncomplainingly this manifestation of supremacy and continued his fealty but for the cruelty to which he was subjected. For years he had forebodingly borne the curses, the kicks and cuffs and beatings that had fallen to his portion; only tonight he had received on his almost bare body the stinging lashes of a whip plied by a strong arm until he groveled at his master's feet and howled in agony, and for no other crime than that he had loitered in his errand of driving in the cows from pasture. He was not possessed of a high order of intelligence, and his master denied that he had an immortal soul; but he did have feeling and memory, and tonight the pent up

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memories of years of misery and abuse welled in his throbbing brain.

He was born on the old homestead ; his mother had been a servant of the family, and his earliest recollections were of her teachings as she endeavored to instill into his youthful mind the duty of loving, serving and obeying that master whom she served so well. He had served and obeyed ; but fear had long since driven love from his heart, and hatred was now permeating his whole being. He knew himself to be an inferior creature, and the idea of revenge never entered his mind. What was he that he could hope for revenge upon so all-powerful a person as the master? He determined that he would do as he had known other mistreated servants to do—run away. He had no belongings to pack, nothing whatever that he could call his own ; so he rose from his bed of straw in the woodshed and stole silently out into the broad highway, lying white in the moonlight, without thought as to where he should go, obsessed with the one idea of leaving the service and the presence of him who had brought so much misery into his life.

The night was cool, the evening breeze invigorating, and, notwithstanding his flesh was sore and bleeding from the punishment he had re-

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ceived, his heart was now light, and he tramped almost merrily along for miles before he realized that he was growing weak from exhaustion, and remembered that he had had no supper. He lay down from sheer exhaustion upon the cool grass under a hedge and slept until the morning sun, sifting through interlacing branches, roused him. Near by he saw a farm-house, and the pangs of hunger prompted him to seek breakfast. Approaching the back door he whiningly begged for food, and was rewarded by a scornfully flung bone upon which remained some scraps of meat. Upon this and a crust of bread found in the back yard he made his breakfast, slaked his thirst from a trough near by, and proceeded on his way. He tramped along the dusty road mile after mile. As the sun approached its zenith the heat became intense; his feet were blistered and sore, his lips were parched and his throat pained. He entered a town, and hoped that he might here find food and shelter; he paused at a gate before an hospitable looking house, debating whether he should enter and ask for food and water to quench his burning thirst, but a large, fierce dog with bristles raised appearing on the opposite side of the fence prompted him to retreat as rapidly as his tired limbs would permit.

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He proceeded down the street and encountered a crowd of boys, who grew hilarious at his travel-worn appearance and threw stones at him. To escape from these he ran into an alley and on to the next street, where he was accosted by a policeman. Fear being dominant in his heart, he turned and fled again. The officer called after him, but as he did not reply or halt, this guardian of the peace followed him; others joined in the chase; boys stoned him, dogs pursued him, and it seemed to the poor fellow that all mankind, and in fact the whole animal kingdom, had turned against him. Fear lent action to his tired limbs, and he did not cease running until he had left the town far behind and his last pursuer had given up the chase. He then lay, or rather fell, down on the bank of a little stream, where he laid his face in the water and lapped up the cooling beverage. His faculties, never brilliant, were numbed by fright, pain and hunger, and he reasoned that if the whole world were against him, he could do no better than return to his master, who, while cruel to him, would at least feed him. So when the evening sun made roseate the western horizon and tinged the low-hung clouds with gold, he painfully arose and turned his dragging footsteps toward his master's home.

His Reward; an Epitaph

Night had shrouded the earth in darkness. Stars peeped occasionally from behind clouds that hung like a pall over the earth; a stillness, broken only by the shrill chirping of insects and an occasional call of some night-bird, encompassed the world. A great loneliness was upon him; he felt himself unloved, unfriended, an outcast. He remembered that just ahead of him was a deep, dark pool in which he could plunge and there in the depths of the black water find surcease from troubles, and he decided that when he arrived at this water he would throw himself from the highest bank and end all. But presently he came to an automobile, with engine stilled and lights extinguished, standing by the side of the road, unattended, and an investigation showed that it was his master's car.

Instinct, which in him was highly developed, suggested that something must be wrong. He looked and listened, and presently saw through the darkness the glimmer of a light coming from an abandoned house near the roadside. Cautiously he approached, concealing himself behind shrubbery that grew in front of the house, and saw through the door that stood partly ajar, by the faint gleam of a lantern which stood on the floor, the body of his master, and bending over it

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and in the act of rifling the pockets, were two ruffians. All his grievances were on the instant forgotten. The duty of service which his mother had taught him was paramount to every thought. With an energy born of the desperate needs of his master he sprang through the doorway, and with a snarl of rage sprang straight at the throat of the ruffian who was just lifting his master's watch. The surprise of the attack so astonished the robbers that they did not wait to give battle, but fled in terror.

Satisfying himself that they were gone, he examined his master and ascertained that he was not injured, but was in a drunken stupor. Love for strong drink was one of the master's failings, and no doubt he had through the effect of intoxicants become helpless, and was lured, or carried, here that the robbers might search him in comparative safety. He knew better than to awaken his master from sleep, so he resolved to stand guard until he should have slept off his intoxication. But weary as he was, he soon fell asleep, and some time later awakened, almost suffocated by smoke. He soon realized that the old building in which they were was on fire, and that unless he could get his master out he must soon perish in the flames. In his weakened condition, it was

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impossible for him to carry, or even drag, the bulky form of the sleeping inebriate, but he took hold of his shoulder and shook and pulled, and called, but to no avail. The smoke was becoming so thick it was impossible to breathe it longer, and the heat was suffocating. He seized the hand and bit it with the energy of a startled beast. The blood spurted, and the pain awoke the sleeper, who sat up drowsily, coughed, then realizing the situation, arose and staggered from the burning ruin, just as the walls toppled in, burying under the debris the faithful servant, whose last cry of fearful agony was heard and recognized by the tyrant.

Too late the master realized and recognized the worth and fidelity of the faithful servant. Too late it was to make amends for the years of cruelty and wrong; but as an ease to his own conscience he recovered the charred remains from the ashes of the ruins and buried them in a corner of the old homestead with the following inscription:

“HERE LIES THE BODY OF ONE WHO, THROUGH A SENSE OF FIDELITY AND DUTY, GAVE HIS LIFE FOR ONE WHO HAD TREATED HIM ILL. GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN, AND GREATER VIRTUES HAD NONE THAN BRUNO, MY DOG.”

The Old Calaboose

Standing in the rear of a modern building facing Main Street, and used as a storeroom for various odds and ends, is a small, old, weather-worn building of peculiar construction, a glance at which excites one's curiosity and impels a closer examination. In dimension it is about twelve by sixteen feet, eight feet high in front and sloping to six feet in the rear. It is built of pine boards, or planks, two inches thick and eight inches wide, commonly known as 2x8's, laid flatwise one upon the other and spiked together, forming a solid wall eight inches thick. In one end is a window about twelve by fourteen inches, iron-barred, giving the structure the appearance of a prison. And a prison it is—or was. In the early days, when the city was composed largely of saloons and dance-halls, and infested by cowboys, gamblers, and bad men and women, it served as the "bastile" in which were imprisoned temporarily the murderer, the cow-thief, the drunkard, the common bum, and in fact all who for any reason came within the grasp of the strong arm of the

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law—the law as administered by the Justice Court of Hiram Smith, J. P.

In those wild days when drunkenness, carousing, gambling, thieving and kindred crimes and misdemeanors were common, and murder was by no means uncommon, many of the leading citizens, and many officers of the law, sought to court favor with the “bad men” by closing eyes to many of the lesser crimes and brawls. But there were some who loyally and steadfastly stood for law and order, and demanded prompt and efficient enforcement of law, and speedy and adequate punishment for law-breakers.

Among those who talked most and loudest for law enforcement, and who did much to subdue the lawless element, and was one of those who were most active in originating the crusade which ultimately drove out the saloon, dance-hall and other houses of vice and iniquity, was Joseph Randall. He publicly and vigorously condemned vice and immorality in whatsoever form it was manifested; he was a pillar of the church, and, if one were to take his word for it, a righteous man and one without sin. He it was who headed the subscription list by which funds were raised to build the calaboose to which the reader is introduced in the first paragraph. And it is the irony

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of fate that he was the first inmate, being confined therein for seventy-two hours, awaiting a requisition from the Governor under which he was taken back to Ohio to face trial on a charge of bigamy, of which offense he was duly convicted.

Of this and many other things connected with the old calaboose I learned from an old timer to whom I applied for information concerning the early history of the town.

It was here, my informant told me, that Sam Howell and Bill Evans were confined while awaiting their preliminary examination on a charge of holding up an express wagon and killing the driver. Across the street still stands the old building in which Justice Smith held court and bound them over for trial; and yonder, a half mile away, stands still the lone tree on which they were hanged, the populace having decided to waive the formality and expense of a trial by jury, and incidentally to guard against a possible miscarriage of justice.

It was in this selfsame prison that the eastern dude, whose name my informant had forgotten, was confined charged with having stolen Pete Stringer's horse. In those days murder was sometimes condoned, but horse-stealing never. And my informant related how in the dusk of evening a mob was formed for the purpose of lynching the

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aforesaid dude. Urged on by Pete, and emboldened by liberal potations, a crowd of about twenty armed cowboys, bad, courageous and desperate men, secured a rope and marched en masse from the Red Dragon Saloon to the calaboose, with the avowed intention of wreaking vengeance and ridding the country of "one more hoss-thief." At the door of the bastile, however, they encountered "Banta" Sims, the diminutive, bow-legged City Marshal, who had drawn a dead-line twenty feet in front of the building, and, with a six-shooter in each hand and determination in his mien, he informed the "committee" that he was the custodian of that jail and the guardian of the peace and dignity of the city; that the accused should have a fair and impartial trial by a jury of his peers, and that he, "Banta," would shoot the first "galoot" who set foot across the dead-line.

The crowd knew "Banta," and grumblingly retired, and the case against the dude was afterwards dismissed, Pete having found his horse in a neighboring pasture, whither it had strayed.

He told me of the evening when Ike Lewis and Dan Pillsbury rode their horses into the Blue Crane Saloon and shot out the lights. Ike was arrested and thrown into the "cooler," but Dan, although the Marshal had emptied his gun at him

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when he refused to halt, rode away, but returned later in the night, shot the lock off the prison door, liberated his pal, and they both escaped to their ranch in No Man's Land, from which point, a few days later, Dan sent the Marshal two dollars to pay for the lock he had broken.

He told me how Mike Winters had been arrested and thrown in, for no worse crime than that of wrapping his billiard cue around the head of an innocent bystander, and how the Marshal had forgotten to search him, and the next morning he was gone, having with his hunting-knife dug his way out beneath the walls. After this a cement floor was placed in the building to guard against another such jail-breaking.

He related an incident of three gamblers who were arrested for plying their vocation, and sentenced each to thirty days in jail. A few days later the Mayor decided to pardon them, on condition that they would leave town. When the Marshal went to the jail to offer them this proposition, he found two of them entirely destitute of clothing. Some one had passed a deck of cards through the window, and one of the inmates had won the entire wardrobe of the other two, in a friendly game of poker, and had insisted upon an immediate delivery of the goods. When this in-

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formation was conveyed to the Mayor he promptly revoked the pardon.

He recounted a romance in which the participants were a man and woman convicted on the same day, he of disorderly conduct, she of vagrancy. Both were fined, and sentenced to stand committed until fine and costs were paid. Neither party having the necessary funds, the Court was in a dilemma, as the jail was not provided with suitable accommodations for lady guests. The defendants relieved the situation and solved the quandary by offering to get married. A collection was accordingly taken up, a license procured, the Justice performed the ceremony gratis, and the honeymoon was celebrated in the old calaboose.

Perhaps the saddest occurrence in the history of the old building is the fate of Jake Cowan. Jake had had trouble with a neighbor, Dave Williams, over a boundary fence; hot words and threats had passed. One morning Dave was found dead in the road a short distance from Jake's house, with a bullet in his brain. A post-mortem examination disclosed that the bullet had been fired from a 38-calibre Colt's revolver. Such a weapon was found in Jake's possession, with one empty chamber. This circumstance, together with the known enmity existing between the two

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men, and Jake's inability to prove an alibi, resulted in his conviction. The jury returned its verdict at midnight, and Jake was led back to the jail to await sentence. On the following morning when the jailer unlocked the door he was confronted with the lifeless body of Jake, swinging from a rafter, his feet scarcely more than three inches from the floor. The jail was furnished with sleeping-cots, the bed of which, instead of the ordinary wire spring, or canvas, consisted of rope; and of this rope the prisoner had secured a sufficient length to pass around his neck and attach to a rafter, after which he had kicked away the box on which he stood to adjust the noose, and was left suspended.

Years afterward, another man, on his death-bed, confessed to having fired the shot that killed Dave Williams, and the circumstances and particulars which he related left no doubt of his guilt. His confession, however, came too late to help poor Jake, except to clear his memory from the ignominy of crime.

In the rear of the modern building facing Main Street still stands the old calaboose. The storms of many winters, the scorching suns of many summers, have left their marks upon it. Men have

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come and men have gone, but it still stands, mute reminder of the thrilling incidents of pioneer days. If those gray and weather-beaten walls could speak, what tales they might unfold of crime, of intrigue, of adventure, of suffering, of remorse, and of repentance. It is the one ancient landmark by which the bustling city of today is recognized as the grownup village that marked this spot a quarter of a century ago; the one link that connects the present with the all-but-forgotten past; the "open sesame" that unlocks the door to Memory's cavern and brings forth the rich treasures of early local history for the entertainment and information of the curious or reflective minds of this generation.

A Joy-ride With a Schoolma'am

William Augustus Evans was his name as it appeared in the family record, but throughout the neighborhood he was familiarly and affectionately known as "Bill." Bill was a popular fellow. While he was not particularly devout, he had no idle or immoral habits, was industrious, kind-hearted, and was universally voted a "good fellow." He was also prosperous. Aside from owning one of the best farms in the community, he was the proud possessor of the only automobile in the township. To be sure, it was an asthmatic and rheumatic two-cylindereed vehicle of ancient vintage, for which he had traded a span of "yearlings." Yet, after he had expended upon it the better part of a week's time, together with all the varied experience and knowledge he had acquired by years of intimacy with the various kinds of farm machinery, and had improved its exterior with a liberal quantity of carmine paint, it not only took on a very creditable appearance, but would actually run—at times.

In spite of his comfortable environments, good looks and morals, and to the surprise of the neigh-

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bors, and the chagrin of certain and divers mothers having marriageable daughters, Bill continued to live in single blessedness, and to occupy his cozy home alone, except for the presence of a "hired man" during the busy season. While he was not averse to the company of the fair sex, treating them all with the utmost urbanity, and making himself generally agreeable, and without any evidence of backwardness or bashfulness that frequently obtains with bachelors, no one could remember when Bill Evans had ever "kept company" with a girl. At the neighborhood parties and entertainments he was always a welcome and honored guest, and apparently enjoyed the festivities as much as any one, although while every other lad had his lassie, Bill stood aloof and, although a thousand times the object of maid's ogling and matron's angling, looked with favor upon no one maiden.

But Bill was not destined to escape forever the dangers that line the pathway of every bachelor—that is, every young and good-looking bachelor. The javelins shot from the sparkling eyes of local beauties had for years been caught fairly on the shield of his nonchalance and he had escaped unscathed; but when pretty Miss Eustine Highbrow impaled him with a glance from eyes that put to

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shame the azure of summer skies, he fell, and great was the fall thereof.

Miss Highbrow was the schoolma'am imported from the county seat, some twenty miles distant, for the purpose of moulding the plastic minds of the youth of that neighborhood.

On a certain Sunday in the month of October, the neighbor at whose home the schoolma'am boarded, invited Bill to dinner. He accepted with alacrity, well knowing he would there meet Miss Highbrow, but little suspecting that her middle name was Fate.

What took place on that epoch-making day was, so far as mortal could discern, but ordinary, and we will draw a quick curtain, as our story concerns only the events of the following Friday evening, and all that is related as preceding that date is merely introductory. Suffice it to say, that on the following Thursday afternoon Bill "happened" to be passing the school-house just as school was dismissed, and the custom of local society, as well as his own inclinations, possibly hers (who shall say?), permitted a brief conversation with the schoolma'am on the school-house steps. After some commonplace remarks, conducted chiefly by Miss Highbrow, Bill's intellect,

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for some unaccountable reason, being befogged, he managed to say :

“By the way, Miss Highbrow, didn't I understand you to say that you are very anxious to go home tomorrow evening?”

“Yes,” she replied. “It would indeed give me inexpressible pleasure to meet the dear pater and mater within the paternal domicile ; I have been absent from home but two short weeks, though it seems almost an eternity. I presume, however, I will have to forego that pleasure for an indefinite time, as I have no means of transportation, and have no idea when I can catch a ride to town.”

Bill rose to the occasion, like the hero that he should have been, and replied :

“My car is in excellent running order, and if you would so honor me I assure you it would give me the greatest pleasure to drive you home tomorrow evening after supper ; we can make the run easily in an hour.”

“Well done, thou good and faithful servant,” thought Bill, after he had concluded this carefully studied and oft rehearsed proposal. His one regret was that he had prepared a speech so elaborate, as he had experienced great difficulty in keeping his heart in its proper anatomical posi-

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tion while speaking, this unruly member having shown a great tendency to rise in his throat and interfere with his enunciation.

If she had hesitated, Bill would have turned and run; had she refused his offer, he no doubt would have died from mortification. But as she promptly, delicately and appreciatively accepted, he did no more than turn a few mental somersaults, and haltingly and stammeringly assure her that the pleasure was all his—no trouble at all—had to go to town anyway, and some other fool remarks that he could never recall.

On the following day Bill spent the entire afternoon in going over his car, burnishing the brass, polishing the woodwork and upholstering, testing the various intricate parts to ascertain that all were in prime condition; and everything being to his entire satisfaction, he dined early, dressed himself with unusual care, and impatiently waited until the proper time should arrive to call for his lady. The weary moments dragged heavily away, but the time finally came—it had to—and Bill proceeded to crank his car and turned its nose toward the temporary abiding place of Her.

She was waiting for him, gowned and bonneted, and without delay took her place beside him.

She was loquacious, but he, while studiously

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ransacking his brain to discover what had become of the many bright things he had intended to say and had stored somewhere in what he thought was a convenient place in his memory, for the first three or four miles, during which time the car behaved in a manner to bring joy to the heart of its owner, could not get his talking machinery into action.

The sun had now sunk behind the western hills, and Night, from her faroff home of darkness, had hung out her mystic curtains and pinned them with the stars. The rythmical purr of the motor, the pleasant temperature of the autumnal evening, and the delightful sensation of moving through space over the perfect highway, perhaps, together with her inability to coax more than monosyllables from her companion, had resulted in a cessation of the flow of small talk that had emanated from her lips, and she now reclined listlessly on the cushions, enjoying a reverie in the twilight. Despairing of recalling what he had planned to say, and realizing that it was up to him to renew the conversation, he remarked :

“Have you noticed how much shorter the days are getting? Seems ’s though it gets dark right after sundown.”

“Yes,” she murmured in reply, “the interval

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of time elapsing after the diurnal luminary has sought his nocturnal habitation beneath the occidental horizon until darkness encompasses the universe is but brief."

After a pause he inquired: "Did you have a good time at the party the other night?"

"To what party do you refer?"

"Why the party at Sam Slonecker's Wednesday night."

"I understand those who were present report a very enjoyable occasion, but I was denied the privilege of the festivities."

"Why, I heard that you were going with Art Summers."

"Indeed!"—with the rising inflection. "I will not deny that I was the recipient of a kind invitation to attend, and, since you mention it, I recall what had escaped my recollection, Mr. Summers did offer to escort me, but, unfortunately perhaps, my duties to my charge preclude me from enjoying the frivolities of society during the week, especially at the beginning of the school year when the work is unusually arduous. But had I been so situated that I could have joined the throng that made merry there, I certainly would not have chosen to be accompanied by the

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elongated specimen of evolved protoplasm whose cognomen has been mentioned."

They were now on the brow of a hill, and Bill threw out the clutch and prepared to coast down the long incline. It was a moment for dreams, dreams wild, exciting, exhilarating. As they swept onward with a gently accelerating speed, with the engine stilled and no pulsation or vibration of the flying car to remind him of his mundane existence, it seemed to Bill that he was floating on outstretched wings through skies of ecstasy. Onward and downward with increasing velocity swept the car, and onward and upward with increasing rapture soared his fancy, carrying him far beyond the gates of Paradise, and returning him to earth only when the diminishing speed of the car warned him that they were ascending the opposite hill. Quickly releasing the clutch, he attempted to complete the ascent on the high speed, but unmistakable explosions showing that the engine was "missing fire" required a change to the low. Like a weary beast of burden the car crept forward, moaning, protesting, remonstrating, and finally, with a gasp like the expiring sigh of some demon, stopped, midway up the hill.

"What's the matter?" the schoolma'am inquired.

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Now if there is anything calculated to inspire treason, arson, murder, or other crime in the heart of an automobile owner, it is to ask him "what is the matter?" when his car refuses to respond. And so Bill must be pardoned if there was a touch of sarcasm or resentment in his voice, as he replied.

"The car has stopped."

"So I perceive," she rejoined. "But what made it stop?"

"I think that the wheels must have ceased their revolutions."

"Oh!" she replied, sweetly. "How very stupid of me. You must understand machinery thoroughly to diagnose a case so cleverly."

No rejoinder seemed necessary, so Bill in silence proceeded to crank the car; but there was no response from the engine. He adjusted the carbureter and cranked the engine; still no relief. He examined the spark-plug, and again cranked the engine, but without avail. Clearly there was but one thing to do, and so Bill, with Miss Highbrow holding the light, crawled under the machine, and there, lying prostrate on his back in the dust of the road, and in his Sunday-best, attacked the car's vitals.

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After fifteen minutes of strenuous endeavor he crawled out and cranked the engine, but there followed no quickening to life of that insensate, obstinate piece of mechanism.

There was a note of deep concern in the schoolma'am's voice as she earnestly inquired, "Mr. Evans, what *is* the matter?"

Now Bill was the most patient fellow in the world, and, while he would have challenged to deadly combat any one who would have so much as insinuated that Miss Highbrow could become annoying, there is a limit to human endurance. Many things he would like to say but dared not, passed rapidly through his mind. He remembered that she had been bombarding him with polysyllables for an hour, and, in the bitterness born of exasperation, he suspected that, with pedantic instinct, she had been parading her learning before his less erudite mind, and he formed a sudden resolve to come back at her. True, he had but little knowledge of the intricate parts of an automobile—in other words, could speak the automobile language very imperfectly—but he reasoned that her ignorance in such matters was greater than his, and that he could get by with it. Accordingly he turned from the object of his troubles

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to the object of his solicitude, and bravely explained :

“You see, it’s like this: The spark-plug, we may say, is a connecting link between the carbureter and the differentiator; the one is charged with positive electricity, the other with negative. Now, if the latter fails to properly differentiate, or if the differentiation is ineffectual to communicate to the carbureter, through the spark-plug and ignition mechanism, the natural tendency is an overabundance of carbon, correspondingly resulting in carbonic acid gas. As you are aware, this gas is inflammable only when the atmospheric and mercurial conditions are properly amalgamated.”

Breathless he paused, expecting her to be vanquished, but, unmoved, she replied :

“No doubt your diagnosis of the case is correct; but your elucidation, due, no doubt, in part to your verbosity, and in part to my ignorance of technical knowledge, or, I might say, to my ignorance of the vernacular, is not perfectly lucid. I tried to follow you, and the scintillations of your exposition have dazzled my mental vision, but the real point in your elucidation, the perspicuity as I may say, passed so quickly over the kaleidoscopic mirage of crowding cognitions as to

A Joy-ride with a Schoolma'am

leave my mind in a state of perturbation. I confess my ignorance of motors, and my general knowledge of dynamics is quite deficient, but if I understand aright, the motor power is furnished by the ignition of gas, which gas is formed from a mixture of gasoline and air. Am I right?"

"Quite so, quite so," he replied.

"Then, it follows, that if the supply of either of these ingredients is exhausted, the gas is no longer generated, and the engine ceases to perform its functions through lack of fuel. Is this not also true?"

"Absolutely."

"Then, pardon me, but have you examined the gasoline tank?"

"No; why should I?"

"Merely to determine if there is anything in it."

"Why, what would you expect to find in the gasoline tank?"

"Frankly, I do not expect you to find anything."

"Then why go to the trouble of investigating?"

"To verify my suspicions. It is my theory that the supply of gasoline is exhausted."

"Why, that tank holds enough gasoline to run a hundred miles, and we haven't come over five."

"Nevertheless, Mr. Evans, I ask you to please

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examine the tank ; won't you do so small a favor for me?"

"Why, certainly ; I'd examine a Standard Oil tank for you, or tank up and examine the North Pole if you should ask it."

To oblige her, Bill examined the tank and found it empty.

"By George!" he ejaculated. "I forgot to fill it before I left home. Here's a pretty fix ; five miles from nowhere, night, and no gasoline!"

"Cheer up, my brave knight. Perhaps the worst is not yet over, but I believe succor is nigh. When we were on the top of yonder elevation methought I observed the glimmer of a light in some farmhouse window hard by. Let us proceed to the summit of this declivity and reconnoiter."

Together they ascended the hill, and arriving at the summit, saw, at no great distance, the welcome light. A few minutes' walk brought them to the farmhouse, where a supply of gasoline was obtained, and, after filling the tank, and cranking the engine with many doubts and misgivings, to their great joy and wonderment it responded to the spark, and they were again on their way, though with a crippled cylinder, and a consequent inability to make more than eight miles an hour.

A Joy-ride with a Schoolma'am

Desiring to resume the conversation, and no other topic suggesting itself, Bill inquired :

“How do you like your school?”

“I have not my likes and dislikes thoroughly catalogued as yet. There are some pupils of mine, a few, whose very ego is repulsive; who, you instinctively feel, have descended from generations of morally and physically unclean and unkempt ancestors, and whose genealogy is gruesome to contemplate; while, on the other hand, there are children exhibiting such elegant anthropological amalgamation as almost, if not quite, compensate for the presence of the first class.”

They were now motoring along a level stretch of country road, the engine behaving badly. Overhead the stars twinkled with crystalline brightness, but there was no moon, and they were forced to rely for guidance upon the carbide lamps which cast a feeble glimmer for a distance of two rods in front of the machine. Just in front of the car, too close to permit of stopping or of turning aside, Bill saw a little animal attempt to cross the road. There was a slight vibration of the car as the wheels passed over a small, yielding body, and then the air was redolent with a perfume not born of roses. Thankful for the darkness, Bill blushed unseen and in silence. With a

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brief backward glance into the darkness, she exclaimed :

“Evidently some member of the *Mephitis mephitica* has been disturbed in its nocturnal perambulations, and has manifested its displeasure by saturating the circumambient atmosphere with a perfume highly obnoxious to the olfactory nerves.”

In silence, save for the wheezing, puffing, snorting, moaning and groaning of the engine, they proceeded mile after mile, with frequent shifting of clutch and lever, until finally the welcome lights of the city gleamed through the darkness. Creeping, snail-like, up a back alley they arrived at her father's home, just as the engine breathed a sigh of relief and died again.

He assisted her to alight ; and after proffering her thanks and assuring him that she had enjoyed the trip immensely, that the bad behavior of the car was more amusing than annoying, now that it was over, she asked :

“Will you not come in, Mr. Evans?”

“No, I thank you, though I am sorely tempted, Miss Highbrow ; but I noticed that a light still shines from the garage, and I'd better run this ice-wagon in and have it tinkered up some before

A Joy-ride with a Schoolma'am

I start home. I have enjoyed your society very much."

"I do not believe you can start the car again. Come in, and partake of our hospitality tonight and make a fresh start in the morning. I assure you Papa will be glad to meet you. He's in politics, you know."

"Again I thank you; but this car is in Dutch with me, and I'm going to run it home tonight and then throw it into the junk-pile. And as it is growing late, and as you are no doubt tired, I will wish you good night."

"Good night!" she replied. "Oh!" she added, "I believe I left a package in the car."

She advanced to receive it from him.

"I will wait until you crank your engine; I don't believe it will go."

With the first turn of the crank the engine began to purr softly and regularly, and as it gathered momentum it pulsated with a mighty throb as if it desired to be released and to demonstrate its power.

"It will run as far as the garage, all right, he said. "Good night!"

"Good night!" she repeated, and added: "Is that all?"

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They stood under the glare of an electric light ; but the hour was late, no pedestrians were in sight, and the curtains of nearby houses were charitably drawn. No prying eyes beheld them, and as she asked, "Is that all?" she placed a perfect hand upon his arm, ostensibly to brush an accumulation of dust therefrom, and looked up into his manly face with eyes that spake volumes of poetry set to seraphic music, for him who could understand, with lips full red, pouting, like the ripe cherry hanging in luscious splendor, not far removed from his. For just one moment Bill hesitated, while he experienced the sensation of one who in a dream falls over a precipice, and then—Oh, close your ears, Dear Cupid!—he replied : "Yes, that's all ; Good night!"

As a somnambulist he entered the car, pushed the lever, and it shot forward, all its parts working in perfect unison. He did not stop at the garage, but passed out of town and onto the country road homeward, eating up the miles, and feeling all the while that he would soon awaken from his dream. Arriving home, still in a semi-comatose condition, he disrobed and prepared for slumber, but first sat down on the side of the bed and thought things over. As is not infrequent with those who live

A Joy-ride with a Schoolma'am

much alone, Bill had acquired a habit of communing with himself, and thus he spoke :

“Now what did she mean when she asked, ‘Is that all?’ She put her little hand on my arm as though she wanted to brush the dust off. But shucks! she let it stay there, and gave my arm just the tiniest pressure. And then her eyes, as she stood there looking up at me, looked like a patch of blue sky, only clearer; looked like a bunch of violets, only bluer; and her lips were not more than six inches from mine, and they looked like—well, more like two ripe cherries than anything else I can think of. But the strangest thing, after I’d said ‘Good night’ twice, she says, ‘Is that all?’ By Jove! I wonder——”

But he did not finish the sentence, but “turned in,” and was soon in slumberland, dreaming of blue eyes and summer skies, and eyes of blue, and great bunches of violets, and blue, blue eyes, and of sunkissed cherries, red and luscious, hanging just beyond his reach, and of red, red lips—and of HER.

The Struggle With Dead-Shot Dick

Through the almost impenetrable darkness, the great detective could discern nothing save the camp-fire of the bandits high up on the mountain side. He had been following a dim and circuitous path, partly by that mysterious sixth sense by which detectives are guided, and partly by flashes of lightning that occasionally illumined the night. Feeling that he had stepped from the path, he paused, waiting for the lightning to direct his steps. Presently a bright flash cleft the sky, and, simultaneously, the report of a pistol, fired from the path above him, smote on his ears and re-echoed from rock to hill, and from hill to rock again. He felt a sharp sting of pain in the head, and instantly, partly from the shock and partly from instinct, dropped to the ground and sought refuge behind a friendly boulder. Minute after minute passed as he crouched and waited, automatic in hand, for another flash of lightning to reveal his would-be assailant. But the threatened storm had passed, and no further electrical demonstration occurred. He put his hand to his head and drew it away blood-stained. A careful ex-

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amination showed him, however, that the bullet had merely grazed his temple and done him no serious injury.

The robbery of the Pacific Express a fortnight before had stirred the whole country. Dead-Shot Dick and his band of bold highwaymen had held up this train, killed the expressman and carried off a half million dollars in gold. The sheriff quickly organized a posse and started in pursuit; but the trail, though broad at the beginning, had become dimmer and dimmer, and finally disappeared completely. A week later the Express Company employed the great detective, who had never yet failed to bring to justice any criminal whose apprehension he had undertaken, and gave the case entirely over to his management, with an offer of ten thousand dollars reward for the return of the gold, and five thousand dollars each for the capture of the bandits, dead or alive.

Not alone was the reward alluring, but the capture of Dead-Shot Dick and his notorious band of outlaws would bring undying fame to him who could accomplish this great coup, and put him in the lead—the greatest of all criminal catchers.

Dead-Shot Dick was the boldest, the cleverest, the luckiest, and perhaps the most cruel bad man

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known to criminal history, and he was followed by five men as bold, if not so clever, as he, and willing to follow anywhere he would lead.

Robbery after robbery, murder after murder, had been traced to this gang, but none of them had ever been apprehended, and the very name of Dead-Shot Dick was sufficient to bring terror to the average sheriff or police officer.

The great detective had taken up the task of running down and capturing this gang alone, partly because it was difficult to get anyone to join him in such a hazardous adventure, and partly because he desired to keep his movements and plans secret from all the world, because it was well known that Dead-Shot Dick had friends and sympathizers; if not actual accomplices, whose identity was not known to the public, and by making confidants of none the detective ran no risk of information leaking and being carried to those whom he sought.

He had taken up the trail where the sheriff lost it, and surely but slowly traced them to their mountain fastness, and the time had now come for him to execute the greatest denouement of his life. Having located their camp, he did not doubt that he could creep up on them and shoot them all dead ere they were aware of his proximity;

The Struggle with Dead-Shot Dick

but such was not his intention. In all his great career he had never yet killed a man, and he was very thankful now that he had not been permitted to catch a glimpse of his assailant when he was smarting with pain and indignant at the cowardly attack. Lying behind the rock, he formulated a plan of action, a plan by which he hoped to take several of the criminals captive without injuring them; it was, perhaps, too much to hope that he could take all six men alive, but he determined to shoot only in case it was absolutely necessary to save his own life, and to take long chances.

He knew now that the path was guarded and that he could not approach the bandits from that direction, much less surprise them. Accordingly he moved silently along the mountain side in a line as nearly at right angles with the path he had been traversing as the topography of the ground would permit, and after three or four hours of painful travel and maneuvering, he approached the camp from above.

Crouching behind a clump of scraggly pines a few yards from where the camp-fire smouldered, by the light of a full moon which shone but dimly through the cloud rifts, he studied the situation. All six of the bad men lay in their blankets around

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the smouldering fire, asleep, evidently feeling themselves secure. After satisfying himself that all indeed slept, he hesitated no longer, but swiftly, though noiselessly, entered the camp and securely bound one of the sleepers, and then another, and then a third. At this moment one of the others stirred, and the great detective instantly prostrated himself and feigned slumber, thinking to be taken for one of his comrades should the man awaken. After a few moments, all being quiet, no sound breaking the stillness of the night, save the heavy breathing of the slumberers, he arose, bound and gagged the fourth member, but turning to secure the fifth, he was immediately seized from behind by Dead-Shot Dick and his sole remaining unbound henchman.

Strong, vigorous, desperate men they were, and the great detective, although fitted with muscles of iron and nerves of steel, thus taken by surprise, was almost borne down at the first onslaught. The impulse of the two bodies thrown against him had driven them almost to the edge of a precipice near which the fire had been built, and in their struggle they were slowly but surely approaching this abyss, and the great detective realized that it was the intent of his foemen to force him over the brink, and their combined weight and

The Struggle with Dead-Shot Dick

strength was more than he could long withstand. With the dexterity of a trained athlete he tripped one of his antagonists who fell headlong, but away from the cliff; he was on his feet in an instant, however, and making to renew the conflict. Realizing that he must make way with one of the enemy, he broke hold and quickly seizing his adversary lifted him bodily and threw him forcibly over the precipice into the yawning chasm, and turned in time to meet the ferocious attack of Dead-Shot Dick. Seeing that the impact of his adversary's body would precipitate him over the brink should they collide, he sidestepped, and the momentum of the bandit carried him onward, and he went headlong into eternity, uttering a fearful scream, like the cry of a lost soul, as he plunged downward. And in dodging, the great detective's foot struck a wet place and he slipped and slid over the precipice in the wake of his late foeman, but as he went over his hands clung to the rocky wall and he hung suspended, with the blue sky cloud-riven above him and hundreds of feet of mountain air below. The wall against which he hung was of perpendicular rock, perfectly smooth; there were no projections upon which he could rest his feet, nor which he could utilize in climbing up. Almost breathless from

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the terrific struggle and fatigued from his exertions, he held on, although he felt his muscles numbing and his grip slipping. He realized that he could not long maintain his hold upon the rock, and knew that when his hold loosened he would be dashed into eternity.

He who has never faced death can hardly imagine the thought that passes through the mind of one who knows that his existence is limited to the period of a few moments. Some recall only their past deeds, or misdeeds, some seek to make peace with their Maker; others lament and cry incoherently; still others become violently insane; and various other manifestations occur in different individuals.

The great detective was not frightened. He had always carried his life in his hands, and fully expected to lose it some time or other in the discharge of the duties of his profession. And while it was sad to die in such a violent way, to die when he was just on the verge of that success for which the ambitious dream, yet no thought of complaint, no blame for fate, or chance, or fortune, or Providence, entered his mind, but his thoughts were much the same as of one going into pleasant slumber.

His first thought was for the unfortunate men

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whom he had so recently bound and gagged. Far away from human habitation, in this lonely, unfrequented place, he wondered if anyone would chance by to release them ere they died of slow starvation and suffocation. The chance was small, but he hoped that some one, perhaps some hunter or prospector, would happen by on the morrow and release the criminals from their bondage that they might not suffer that painful death.

He thought of his mother, of her grey-crowned head bowed with grief at his untimely end, and prayed that she might be comforted; he thought of a brown-haired, brown-eyed school girl, his sweetheart of yesterday, and wondered if those bright eyes would shed tears for him; he even thought of his pet dog, and wondered if it had had its supper that night; and then his paralyzed fingers loosed their hold and he fell down—down—down. Consciousness mercifully left him ere his breathless body struck on the jagged rocks below——

And then Robert Gordon, aged fourteen years, awoke, shivering with cold and fright, to discover that he had fallen a distance of sheer two feet from his bed to the floor.

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I said in my haste, "All men are liars." If good King Solomon had been less importunate ; if he had taken the time and precaution to prepare a carefully considered and typewritten statement before suffering himself to be interviewed, what he probably would have said is : "All fishermen are liars." But it amounts to about the same thing.

All men are fishers. Do you observe that man with the silk tile, the Brazilian diamond the size of a radish, the long, bony fingers and the beady eye? He is a fisher after rubes—rubes who are always willing to part with good money for the privilege of witnessing a demonstration proving that the hand is quicker than the eye. That man with the uncreased trousers, the smile that won't come off and the "God-bless-you-brother" hand-shake, is a fisher after votes. That tastefully gowned lady, toying a pink sun-shade and displaying three inches of silk-covered ankle, she is a fisher after men. And so on *ad infinitum*.

But it is not to any of these classes of fishers that I desire to especially call your attention ; nor

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yet do I refer to that class who, with seine and net, harpoon or spear, make war upon the denizens of the deep for commercial purposes; but to that great body of citizenry who, when the spring rains have cleansed the atmosphere of all impurities, when dandelions deck the lawn in golden splendor, when the meadow lark warbles his sweet clear call to his prairie mate, when the garden spade brings up oodles of fat, wriggly worms, when the lure of the great outdoors appeals to all who have the back-to-nature microbe in their systems, and more especially to two average individuals who form a part and parcel of that great citizenry, to wit—I myself and Brown. Brown isn't his real name, but that is what we will call him. I have heard him called worse names than Brown.

It was one of those ideal May days when all the world was atune to the music of nature; the prairies were gayly decked in garments of green, studded with the dandelions' gold and the daisies' blue; the chirp and twitter of birds of many species were heard on every hand; a precocious katydid kept telling it from a grass plot; through the open window came the fragrance of the rich loam upturned by a nearby gardener. The lure was upon me; I had heard the call, and was inwardly fuming because the immediate press of

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business kept me chained to a desk, and I wondered how many days it would be before a legal holiday would give me a legal excuse to spend a day on the river, when in came Brown and informed me that it was a nice day; as if I didn't realize that it was a nice day; as if I didn't know that there never had been a day since the dawn of creation when the sky was so blue, the sun so bright, the air so pure and exhilarating, nor a day on which the bass would bite so ravenously. I agreed with him that it was a nice day, and added: "Well, what of it?"

"O, nothing," he replied, "only Smith was out to the river yesterday, and he tells me that the waters teem with bass, and they bite pretty well."

"Now, look here," I retorted, "You shut up and get out of here. I've got work to do; yes, I know it's ungrammatical, but that is exactly what I said, 'I've got work to do,' and I have no time to go fishing, and I won't be insulted nor tormented by hearing you talk about it."

"O, come now; I know you're pretty busy, but you need a layoff. You're nervous and irritable, and sometimes absent-minded. Why, only last Sunday I saw you put a quarter into the contribution box which you mistook for a nickel. You won't lose any time by taking a day off;

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you will be so refreshed and renewed that when you get back you can do twice the work in a given time that you can do now, and do it much better and easier. Lock up, and let's go fishing."

Brown is a persuasive talker and I felt my resolution yielding.

"Well," I answered, "I wouldn't mind going down and throwing a line into the river this afternoon."

"The river's all right," Brown agreed, "but you know Jones is one of the most devoted followers of old Izaak around here; there isn't a lake, a pond, nor a stream around here but he knows—knows every spot in it—just when and where to fish, and just what you may reasonably expect to catch in any given place at any given time. Did you ever fish in Lake Springer?"

"No, never heard of it."

"What!" surprised; "Lake Springer lies twenty miles due north of this burg, is a body of water covering more than two sections, and is fifty feet deep. There are all kinds of fish there, and Jones tells me it affords the best bass fishing of any water he knows. We can drive up there this afternoon, take a camping outfit and stay as long as we want to; we won't need to take along much grub—live off the country."

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To this proposition I demurred, but Brown talked me into it, and about two o'clock that afternoon we started on a buck-board, with a small tent, some cooking utensils and rations for two days. Brown insisted it was not necessary to take along any meat, as we would eat nothing but fish; but I managed to slip in a small piece of bacon.

The drive out was delightful; the atmosphere was of just the right temperature; the breezes, just sufficient to mildly ripple the surface of still water, were perfume-laden; it was a rare day, a perfect day, and we enjoyed it to the utmost. We arrived at the lake, a beautiful expanse of clear, limpid water, tree-fringed, about seven o'clock, and while I erected the tent, turned the horse out to graze, and fried bacon and made coffee over a camp-fire, Brown got out his fishing tackle and succeeded in catching enough perch for breakfast.

Supper over, we lounged around on the grass, smoking and talking of the exploits of the morrow. A million stars were mirrored in the lake; in the heavens a half moon circled the horizon and shed her benign effulgence over the peaceful scene. About ten o'clock we turned in, as we expected to be up betimes in the morning, and I dreamed of big fish, little fish, middle-sized fish, and fish

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generally ; and Brown says he dreamed of catching the identical whale that Jonah swallowed.

The next morning, just as the first gray streaks of dawn peeped over the eastern horizon, Brown called me, and I found him outside the tent, with the perch he had caught the previous evening sizzling and smoking in the frying-pan, the coffee bubbling in the pot, its aroma arising like sweet incense to the gods. Brown isn't a past master in culinary science. The coffee boiled too long, the fish were overdone, but I think I never enjoyed a breakfast more than on that occasion in all my more or less eventful life.

Just as the sun's rays climbed the trees growing on the lake's east bank we made our first cast, and again and again our lines whizzed out, farther and farther each time, and each time were reeled in empty.

After a half hour's persistent but fruitless endeavor, Brown announced that the hour was too early for successful casting. "The best time to catch bass," he went on, "is between eight and ten o'clock ; that being true, it follows that the ideal hour is 9 A. M. ; therefore, the logical thing for us to do is to adjourn to that hour." I had absolute faith in Brown's piscatorial lore, and readily acquiesced.

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We threw our rods on the bank, lit out pipes, sat down in the shade of a magnificent elm, and determined to wait with what patience and fortitude we could until the finny tribe should be ready for breakfast. For an hour we sat and smoked, mainly in silence; Brown's garrulity had subsided, and my nerves seemed to be affected by some impending calamity. There was something in the air that affected both of us in much the same way that the felt presence of an unseen storm is said to affect the wild animals of prairie and forest. We were not frightened, merely restless, apprehensive of something we knew not what. Brown consulted his watch every few minutes, and at last he announced, with what I thought to be feigned enthusiasm, that the hour had come. We arose and again took up our rods, but the sprightliness, the effusiveness of our bearing of the early morning had departed.

We tempted those obdurate bass with various flies, "Alexandria," "Bloody Butcher," "Brown Hackle," "Yellow Coachman," "Professor"; we tried the "Halcyon" spinner, the "Big Injun" spoon, the "Animated" minnow, live minnows and live frogs, but they would have naught to do with us.

We tramped round the lake testing every favor-

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able-looking point. There was a contraption that seemed to be the result of the efforts of some unskilled workman to manufacture an imitation of a boat, and we embarked in this, rowed out to the middle of the lake and tried our luck there, with the same result; returned to the shore and held a heated discussion as to whether we should play the losing game longer. I was for quitting, but Brown insisted it would be disgraceful for us to return home without a string of bass, and we finally compromised by agreeing to fish for one hour longer, at the expiration of which Brown agreed to abandon the job if luck were not better.

I had become weary of casting and determined to try still fishing for a time, and so throwing my line out about fifty feet I sat down on the bank and religiously watched the float. The sun was now at its zenith and the heat was becoming disagreeable; we were getting hungry too, the flies were bothersome, and the joy and glory of the morning had vanished.

As I sat there watching my red and green float lying listlessly on the water, I suddenly started and rubbed my eyes to make sure that I had not been sleeping, for I thought I had observed it "bob." It bobbed again, and Brown saw it; there could be no mistake now; I had a nibble,

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and I immediately became enthused again. The float remained quiet for a moment, and then slowly sank perpendicularly down, as if by its own weight; I pulled slightly on the line, the float again appeared on top, and when I released tension it slowly and majestically, if so small a thing as a float can be said to move majestically, floated outward toward the deeper water.

"You've got him!" yelled Brown. "It's a big bass. Reel him in!"

I commenced to reel in; the float obediently followed the impulse of the reel, and I could tell by the amount of force necessary to exert that I had a large fish hooked at last. But what puzzled me was that it put up no fight; I had never before seen a bass act like that one; but Brown assured me that it was a bass, and Brown is a fisherman of considerable repute, while I lay claim to no especial prowess. I reeled him in about half way to the bank, and then, on Brown's suggestion, let him have some slack, whereupon the float again started slowly outward. This time I let him go out about a hundred feet, then reeled him in again, slowly and deliberately, according to Brown's directions. But when he was within about ten feet of the shore, and I was about to ask Brown to take the landing net, that

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bass suddenly braced his feet against the bottom and pulled backward like a balky mule, the line snapped just at the end of my rod, and we watched the float making for deep water; that is, I watched it; but Brown's enthusiasm and aggressiveness were now fully aroused and he did not purpose to lose that fish, and he accordingly went into the water after it, waded out until the water reached his chin, and then realizing that he would stand no chance in a swimming match against a real live bass, he returned to the shore, and we both got into that alleged boat and started in pursuit of that elusive float which we could see at some distance. Brown is an adept oarsman, and it did not take long to come alongside the float, which I attempted to grab, but missed it, and it turned off in a different direction. Brown ported his helm. Seems to me I have read of something like that in "Cooper's Sea Tales." Anyway, he turned the boat and again started in pursuit, caught up, and I again missed seizing the float by an inch, and nearly upset the boat in the effort. And so we raced round for thirty minutes, Brown masterfully managing the awkward craft, and I wonderfully mismanaging the seizing process.

I called to Brown that grappling hooks would

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come in good play ; but he merely admonished me not to be some kind of an emphatic fool, but to grab that line. Brown's exertions and the gyrations of the funny old boat appealed to my sense of humor, and while I dared not laugh, I purposely missed two or three grabs in order to enjoy the effect my clumsiness had upon Brown. But finally, just after Brown had suggested that I take the oars and let him pick up the line, I reached out and seized the line just above the float, and wound it firmly round my hand that his bass-ship might not jerk away from me. Brown halted the boat as soon as he could, and I commenced to draw in, slowly, inch by inch, as I did not wish to alarm the fish and cause him to break the line again. At last I knew that he was just under the surface of the water, and giving a quick direct upward pull, I drew out of the water and triumphantly landed in the bottom of the boat, without the aid of a landing net, which in our haste we had left on the bank, a five pound—no, not a bass—it was a mud turtle.

I dropped to a seat, and then seeing the expression on Brown's face, the picture of us chasing around for an hour trying to land this worthless submarine came before me in every detail,

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and I gave vent to the hilarity I had felt ever since Brown took the oars.

I had never before believed there was any truth to the story that a tortoise once outran a hare, but after participating in the race that this fellow gave us, I could see that it is wholly probable. As for Brown, he stared in open-mouthed wonder and bewilderment, first at the turtle and then at me, and then he swore, not gently and softly as a gentleman should swear, but the language he used would have made the vocabulary of the proverbial trooper resemble a fire-cracker compared to the San Francisco earthquake.

We returned to camp, and, too tired to cook dinner, lay in the shade of the tent and scratched chiggers and fought mosquitoes the remainder of the afternoon.

And such an afternoon! Never have I known another May day in which the heat was so intensely oppressive; never did I see in May the sun remain stationary directly overhead all afternoon; and I am firmly convinced that somewhere in the world that day there was a modern Joshua trying to show off. There was not a breath of air stirring; the surface of the lake was as smooth as glass; the leaves appeared wilted; the birds that

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had sung so gayly in the morning now sat beneath the shade with open mouth and drooping wings. The only things exhibiting any signs of animation were the chiggers and mosquitoes, which were potent with pernicious activity.

But along toward evening, Joshua No. 2 having, presumably, vanquished his enemies, the sun dropped a few notches, the mercury followed a hair's breadth, and the pangs of hunger forced us to prepare supper, which we did by making coffee and frying the remnant of our bacon. And then came the sunset. And if there is anything that could compensate for the tortures of that day and the horrors of the night which followed, it was the transcendant beauty of that sunset. The sun lay like a huge golden globe on the western horizon and shot his fiery arrows across the bosom of the lake, and as it sank behind the western hills pencils of golden light flared upward like a halo of glory.

To the north lay what before sunset had appeared a dull, filmy mist; now it glowed in roseate splendor, such a beautiful rose- and gold-tinted spectacle as only the hand of nature or the wand of a fairy princess could paint. To the south a cumulous cloud had been floating, not dark and threatening as these clouds sometimes are, but

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light and feathery ; now it was tinted with pearl and rose and amber, and around its irregular rim was a ring of burnished gold.

And so the sunset passed and the twilight came. The surface of the lake rippled, the breeze sighed lightly through the leaves, insects chirped, a mocking bird caroled, the mosquitoes disappeared, the clouds thickened. The sky grew as black as the heart of a gossip. The breeze, which had been blowing from the southeast, suddenly calmed, and a death-like stillness prevailed for twenty minutes, the sky being cleft by sharp, distant flashes of lightning. The lightning grew more intense, the thunder peals appalling ; a few great drops of rain fell ; the great elm under which we had rested was severed by a lightning bolt, and then the wind came out of the northland, a furious chilling blast, and the rain fell in torrents, as it always falls in story-books. We sought refuge within our friendly tent, but little protection it afforded. The rain blew in under the sides, our blankets and our clothing were drenched, and we sat for hours—that is, it seemed like hours, but it was probably not more than thirty minutes—on the edges of the tent to hold them down. And then the storm abated as suddenly as it came, the clouds parted and the stars peeped through the

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aperture, like bright eyes looking at you through a parted curtain. Presently the moon broke through a cloud rift, and within an hour the sky was fully bereft of all clouds, and had it not been for our wretched condition, and the riven, uprooted elm, we might well have thought the storm but a hideous nightmare. But there we were, cold, drenched, miserable; everything was so wet we could not make a fire to dry our clothing or warm ourselves, and we passed the night shivering and dejected.

Next morning's sun soon dried and warmed us. We made our breakfast on coffee and rain-soaked bread, and started for home.

We arrived home about two o'clock that afternoon, where we proudly exhibited a fine string of fish, and Brown explained in detail the manner of taking the largest ones; but neither of us told of encountering a barefooted boy on the river bank, with a willow pole and a can of worms, nor that the boy was two dollars richer for having met up with us.

A Knight of the Golden Eagle

A Knight of the Golden Eagle

I can't remember when I first decided to become a "lodge man." From the time to which my memory runneth not to the contrary secret organizations held a great fascination for me, and at an early age I determined that when I became a man I would join all of them. It was slow waiting; but the years dragged by, and finally I attained my majority, and on that great day, the twenty-first anniversary of my birth, I was interviewed by committees from three different lodges who solicited my application for membership in their respective orders. I was then employed as a clerk at a small salary, and my pecuniary condition was such that I could not indulge all of my fancies, so I took the matter under advisement for a few days in order to properly consider and determine which of the lodges I preferred to honor with my application. On the day following I was solicited by members of two other organizations, and before a fortnight I had been admonished, solicited, urged, begged and coaxed to join each of the twenty-seven secret organizations of our town, save one. This constant nagging annoyed

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and rather disgusted me, and caused me to lose faith in lodges; for, I reasoned, if these fraternities are the good things I have been led to suppose they are, why is it necessary for them to make such constant efforts to secure recruits? If they possess the many advantages claimed for them, why is it not so generally known and appreciated that men will desire affiliation and seek admission without the impetus of outside or inside persuasion? I failed to find a satisfactory solution to this problem, and I finally decided that the benefits, the advantages and the glamour of secret orders was largely imaginary and hugely magnified, and that I would have naught to do with them. And so I proceeded on the even tenor of my way, attended strictly to business, and with the beginning of every year I was handed promotion and increased salary by my employers.

During all this time I was frequently importuned to join this or that order, but I remained firm in my resolve. I could but observe, however, that there was one order which I had never been solicited to join. This piqued me at first, as I could not help thinking that the members of this organization considered me unworthy to become one of them. But as the fraternity numbered among its members many of my best friends,

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I was forced to discard this theory. The rather fanciful name borne by this order was "Knights of the Golden Eagle," and the emblem was a spread-eagle holding a bundle of arrows in its claws and an olive branch in its beak. Its members, I observed, were the best young men of the town, and though I met them frequently in a business and social way, and was really chummy with several of them, none had ever solicited my membership. After several years of observation I decided that this was my ideal lodge; that here was an order that did not go out into the highways and byways and garner in its members, but that good men and true were naturally attracted and of their own initiative sought admission. Accordingly I went to a friend of mine, a member of this order, told him that I desired membership, and asked him for information concerning the lodge. He informed me that this was a purely fraternal society; that its object was to help one another, and to make the world brighter and better; that one of its chief aims was the eradication of selfishness and egotism; that all good men who subscribed to the tenets of the order were gladly admitted, and that he would be pleased to present my application. I accordingly made application in due form, and in course of

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time was notified that I had been balloted upon favorably and that I should present myself at the Aerie for initiation on a certain night. At the appointed time I was present, and after being duly prepared I was escorted into the lodge-room and initiated into the hidden mysteries of the first rank. The ceremonies were beautiful and impressive, the lectures instructive and edifying, and I was agreeably surprised at the total absence of "rough stuff," which I had always understood entered into every initiation. On the next meeting night I presented myself for further instruction, and further mysteries were explained to me. I was taught in this rank that vanity, pride and self-laudation were not assets in the life of man, but on the contrary were heavy liabilities. The lesson of this rank was more especially to impress the candidate with the fact that he is but an integral and infinitesimal part of the great wide world; and so well was I impressed that it would have required a powerful microscope to locate my ego had one searched for it then. During these ceremonies I sat and watched paraded before my mental vision every mean thing I had ever done, every unkind word I had spoken, every contemptible act done or contemplated by me, and I saw myself as I really was; the mask which

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had concealed me from myself was stripped, and I knew myself and realized my weaknesses and shortcomings as never before. Theretofore I had cajoled myself into believing that I was a pretty decent fellow; but I now saw much room for improvement, and resolved that I would lead a better life.

Once more I presented myself for further and final instructions, and this final rank came near proving my finality. I have heard of the "third degree" administered to suspected criminals to force confessions from them; and if this "third degree" is anything like as stiff as the third those Eagles gave me I want to go on record as being for prison reform. As I look back at the procedure now, I can see that I was never in physical danger; but at the time doubt, fear, anxiety, perplexity, and various other forms of mental disturbances, permeated my whole being. I realized that the "rough stuff" I had heard of was not merely imaginary; in fact, my imagination was never brilliant enough to conjure the awful things those fellows did to me. I was accused of cowardice by men who would never have dared make such an accusation on the streets; I was urged to be careful and prudent, when at the time I was so frightened I did not know the meaning of those words.

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After it was all over I could understand that everything was done for my own good ; the things that seemed so terrible at the time being not cruel and unusual punishment, but unique methods used to impress the lessons upon me ; and, believe me, they were truly impressive, and I emerged not only a full-fledged Eagle, but a wiser and better man. Another thing I learned : that the reason one must be at least twenty-one years of age before he is eligible to admission into this lodge, is that a candidate is scared out of all future growth, and if those who were immature physically were permitted to join we would soon become a race of dwarfs.

The next day I invested seven dollars in a beautiful lodge emblem, which I proudly placed on the lapel of my coat, and almost caused displacement of the cervical vertebræ by craning my neck to look at it so frequently.

About a week later I was given my annual two-weeks vacation, which I planned to spend "seeing America first." As I stood on the station platform waiting for my train, a stranger approached me, and after giving me the recognition sign and grip, he explained that he was down and out, had eaten nothing for twenty-four hours, and could I accommodate him with the price of a

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meal? I gave him a dollar, and swelled with pride as I realized that I had relieved a worthy brother in distress. Just then my train pulled in, I boarded it, and found that everyone was apparently traveling my direction, as every car was crowded. I finally found a seat in the chair car beside a winsome young lady, who opened the conversation by informing me that her brother wore an emblem just like mine, and that she had often heard him speak of his order with pride. Presently the auditor came along and the aforesaid w. y. l. discovered that she had left her hand-bag containing her ticket and purse on a seat in the depot. Here was a sister of a worthy brother in distress, and in fulfillment of my brotherly duty I paid her fare, two dollars thirty-five cents. She took my address and assured me that she would remit me as soon as she arrived at her destination; but she must be long delayed, as I have not heard from her yet.

At 8 P. M. we arrived at L——, where I changed for a southbound train; one hour to wait. I strolled into the ladies' waiting room. A fashionably dressed lady was walking the floor and humming a lullaby to a two-months-old baby carried tenderly in her arms. In the course of her promenade she dropped her handkerchief,

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which I restored to her. She thanked me and remarked that travel was very wearisome to the baby, causing it to be fretful, et cetera ; that she had walked the floor with it until she was almost exhausted, but, thank goodness, it had at last fallen asleep, and perhaps she could sit down and rest awhile. And then she observed my emblem, and informed me that her husband stood high in the lodge, and that she herself was a member of the Ladies' Auxiliary. This serving as an introduction, we sat down and talked desultorily for awhile, when she asked me if I would kindly hold the baby while she secured her ticket.

I was about to offer to get her ticket instead, when I reflected that it would be a relief to the tired little mother to get the youngster off her arm, if only for a few moments ; and so the cherub was carefully transferred to my arms, and the lady went off in the direction of the ticket window. Ten minutes elapsed and she had not returned. The child slumbered peacefully, thumb in its mouth, but presently it opened its heavenly blue eyes, and seeing unfamiliar features it commenced to cry, not softly and crooningly as I supposed babies cry, but loudly, vehemently and viciously. I was without experience with babies, and I know but little concerning their anatomy, but I'll bet a

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month's salary that that youngster had lungs of cowhide and vocal chords of brass. It continued to squall, and everyone looked daggers at me. I bounced it on my knee as I had seen others do. I got up and paced the floor with it, but it continued to bawl. I thought surely the mother would hear it and come to my rescue; but she came not. I went to the ticket window; she was not there. I searched the station; she was not to be found. I put in a frantic half hour, and as the mother had seemingly completely disappeared, and as I was wild with nervous excitement and the waiting passengers looked as though they were ready to mob me, it dawned upon me that perhaps I was the victim of a plot, and I accordingly appealed to a policeman and told him my story. He listened patiently, but I could see by his stoic countenance that he did not believe one word I was saying, and when I had finished he replied:

"Och! An' Oi've heard thim sthories before; ye'll niver git rid of yere kid wid sich a raw tale as thot; ye'll come to the station wid me, so ye will."

I remonstrated, expostulated and gesticulated, but he admonished me to keep my "sthory for the jedge," and calling a patrol wagon forced me to accompany him to the police-station. As luck

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would have it, his chief was an old friend, a former schoolmate of mine, and he ordered me released upon hearing my statement. I returned to the station just in time to catch my train, and with a firm and steadfast resolution never again to hold a baby for any strange woman, not though she belonged to all the Ladies' Auxiliaries in the land.

I was speeding southward and had just begun to breathe freely, when a well-dressed stranger sat down in the seat facing me, glanced at my lapel button, and inquired, "Where do you belong?" I told him, and he then gave me the name and number of his lodge. "And by the way," he says, "I am ashamed to confess it, but today I received notice that I am three years delinquent in my dues, and that unless I remit by the 30th of this month I will be suspended. You see I travel all the time, don't get home often, and a fellow neglects these things; this notice has been following me from place to place for a month. By George! this is the 28th; I must get my dues there by day after tomorrow." He opened his grip, took out stationery, produced a fountain pen and wrote something; he then addressed an envelope, took out his pocketbook and counted out a number of bills, folded them and placed them in the envelope with the letter.

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"Now I will hand this to the mail clerk at the next stop and they will get it in time. But," he added, "that makes a pretty bulky letter to send through the mails; anyone could tell that it contains money, and these mail clerks are not any more honest than they should be. Do you happen to have a twenty-dollar bill about you?" I did, and producing it, exchanged for the fold of bills he took out of the envelope. I was about to transfer this roll to my purse, when my new-found friend suggested that I would better count it. I did so, finding one ten, and nine one-dollar bills, and informed him that it was one dollar short. "Why, I don't see how that could be," he replied. "Let me see." He took the bills and counted them. "Why, that's right; wonder if I could have dropped one." He looked on the floor, on and under the seat, peered into the envelope from which he had taken the money, but not finding the missing bill concluded that he had made a miscount in the first place, and says: "Well, we'll make it all right," and he folded the bills, placed a silver dollar on top of the fold and returned them to me just as the train came to a stop at the station. "Thanks, old boy! I'll mail this and we'll have a talk when I get back." I put the money in my pocket and resumed my magazine

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where I had left off when he commenced the conversation. I heard the conductor's "All aboard!" The train started and my friend had not returned. We arrived at the next station, an hour's run; he had not yet returned. I felt a sickly premonition, produced the money from my pocket and counted it again; the ten-dollar bill was gone; so was my friend.

I had encountered two brothers and two sisters that day, and four times had I been stung. I took off my seven-dollar lodge emblem and transferred it to my pocket.

I arrived at my station at 1 o'clock A. M., stiff and tired from my long ride. I delivered my baggage to a robber in the uniform of a taxi-driver, and, feeling the need of exercise, decided to walk to my hotel.

Three blocks from the station a stranger stepped out of an alley and asked if I could oblige him with a match. I felt in my pocket for one, when it seemed to me that all the stars in the heavens had fallen upon my head. I had a faint impression that I had been stung again, and I remember that as I went down I felt a little thrill of joy in knowing that it was not a lodge brother who had imposed upon me this time.

As to what occurred during the succeeding few

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days my memory is entirely blank, and I relate the incidents as told to me, not from any personal recollection.

I had been beset by foot-pads, rendered unconscious by a blow on the head with a blunt instrument, probably a piece of gas-pipe, and my pockets rifled of everything of value except my lodge emblem, which was evidently overlooked. I was discovered inert on the sidewalk a few moments later and taken to an emergency hospital. There I was given first aid, after which the attendants searched my clothing for something with which to identify me; but there was absolutely nothing. My lodge button was discovered, and while this was not absolute proof that I was a member of the order, I was given the benefit of the doubt and the local lodge was notified. The members responded loyally, and saw that I received the best medical aid and attention obtainable. In a few days I was able to leave the hospital, and was taken to the home of one of the brothers. In a week more I had completely regained my physical and mental strength, except that my memory had entirely forsaken me. I could not tell who I was, nor where I belonged, nor how I came to be at the hospital. Everything that had occurred subsequent to my re-

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gaining consciousness at the hospital was perfectly clear, but I had no recollection of anything prior thereto. Every effort was made to revive my memory. The lodge brothers put me through every test, and while it seemed to me that somewhere, sometime, I had seen or heard something similar, I could answer no signal, nor give any evidence that I had ever seen the work. The whole thing, and in fact the whole panorama of life, appeared to me like the tangled threads of a half-forgotten dream, hazy, indistinct, yet impressing me with the feeling that presently I should grasp the threads and weave them into connected meaning. It was observed that I had a special abhorrence for babies and one-dollar bills.

And so days and weeks went by and ripened into months, and all the while I was given the most tender care and solicitude by the brothers, who did not even know that I was a brother, but who were caring for me on the strength of the possibility that I might be such. I was kept a good deal in the open air and given an abundance of exercise. When I was not playing tennis or golf I was enjoying long motor rides, and it is to one of these that I owe my resuscitation.

A crowd had motored out to a lodge picnic

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many miles from town. Returning, the car in which I was riding was in the lead, when another car attempted to pass. This precipitated a race, and away we sped down the splendid thoroughfare as fast as six cylinders could take us. We had attained a speed of more than fifty miles an hour, when the steering-gear broke, or became loosened, or refused to respond, and the car made straight for the fence that enclosed the roadway. Our driver applied his brakes instantly, but the momentum of the heavy car was too great to overcome in so short a distance, and so it struck the fence, and all the occupants were thrown out, but fortunately none were seriously injured. I was thrown fully twenty feet, striking my head on the hard ground, where I lay perfectly still until one of the boys came to me and raised me up, when I handed him a match. The concussion of the fall had undone the work caused by the blow on my head six months previous, and the first thing I did was to complete the act I had commenced when the foot-pad struck me.

My memory was completely restored, and I was able to respond to every test of recognition the brothers gave me.

When I realized how I had been cared for by the brothers of this great fraternity, my faith in

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the order was restored, and I again placed my emblem proudly on my lapel. And I have never since lost faith in the lodge nor in a brother, although now, when a stranger attempts to curry favors with me on the strength of his lodge membership, I require him to produce his receipt for dues in order to prove his present standing in the lodge.

The Old Home Town

Whenever I think of the old home town, nestled among the hills so brown, with its pious folk and its tall church spire, its lovely girls of the village choir, its well-worn streets and its shady nooks, its freedom from graft and its absence of crooks, its joy that thrills and grief that inures, where sorrows are brief and pleasure endures, its truth and beauty and charity sweet, a welcome smile from all you meet; where there's never a pang and never a dread, not a breaking heart nor an aching head; where the good

Whenever I think of the old home town, nestled among the hills so brown, with its straight-laced folk and its tall church-spires, its gossip women and all-fired liars, with its weed-grown streets and its moss-grown backs, its griefs that pain and trouble that racks, its orthodox views and its lack of news, its daily life that gives one the blues, its venom and hatred and strife and spite, its life as dark as the shades of night; where there's never a word of love or cheer; where there's never a laugh, but many a tear;

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one does is passed along, and the days are spent in laugh and song; where the cares of one are the concern of all, and never in vain does a brother call; where sin is wanting and goodness thrives, and the sons of men lead upright lives; where there's never a wish for things forbid, never a light under bushel hid; where an honest thought and a noble deed is a part and parcel of every creed; where there's much of goodness and little of crime, where men rejoice and never repine; where gayety reigns and laughter peals, and the wounded spirit quickly heals; where the women smile and the children

where the good one does is misconstrued, and the natural person reckoned rude; where the business of one is the concern of all; where brains are few and souls are small; where pleasure is sinful and joy a crime, and hypocrisy stalks through the town sublime; where there's never a wish for the things that move the soul to action and virtues prove; where an honest thought is the Devil's own, and a noble act is a thing unknown; where there's much of slander and little of truth; where there's plenty of age, but none of youth; where gayety hurts and laughter palls; where the graveyard yawns

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play, and the hearts of men are always gay; where there's less of selling and more of giving, and life is truly worth the living, — I thrill with joy when I realize that the old home town with its sacred ties is one of life's sweetest memories.

There was never a man in that old home town who tried to pull a brother down; there was never a maiden sweet and fair who toyed or trifled with dalliance there; there was never a wrongful action known; there was never a seed of discord sown; there was never an evil thought expressed; there was never a cruel word or jest;

and the sexton calls; where the women fret and the children cry, and men look with doubt on the passer-by; where there's much of selling and none of giving, and life not worth the half of living, — I thrill with joy when I realize that the old home town with its threadbare ties is only a ghost of memories.

There was never a man in the old home town who escaped the slanderer's poisoned wound; there was never a maid too sweet and fair to feed the gossips the glutton's share; there was never a truth to the world made known; there was never a seed of virtue sown; there was never a no-

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there was never a wish for unjust things, a chance to scorch one's unfledged wings; there was never temptation to mortal given leading away from the truth and Heaven; there was never a wrong example set that was not followed by regret; there none from virtue held aloof who did not meet the stern reproof, and pitying glances, and angry frown, of the dear old folk in the dear old town.

I yearn for the past, for the days gone by, and long with a sad and wistful sigh for the dear old days in the dear old town that nestled among the hills so brown. Yet I thrill with joy when I realize

ble thought expressed; there was never a chained soul showed unrest; there was never a wish for higher things, a desire to try one's unfledged wings; there was never a hope to mortal given, telling of love or hinting of Heaven; there was never an action worth one's while that did not meet with a smirk and smile from the putrid lips the gossips wore in the old home town where I lived of yore, as they turned it over and rolled it o'er in their daily chats at the corner store, and roasted each other a well turned brown in their gossipy moods in the old home town.

Some yearn for the past, for the days gone

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that the old home town
with its sacred ties, far
away from the haunts
of the tempter lies, and
is one of life's sweetest
memories.

by, and long with a sad
and wistful sigh, for the
dear old days in the
dear old town that nes-
tled among the hills so
brown. But I thrill with
joy when I realize that
the old home town with
its threadbare ties, and
its damnable, damag-
ing, hellish lies, is only
a ghost of memories.

A Five-Hundred-Dollar Race

(This story is not mine. It was written by John, my eleven-year-old son, as a part of his school exercises, and is inserted here partly to preserve it, and partly because, in my judgment, it shows budding literary genius.)

A rich old gentleman who had made several million dollars selling canned mule-meat and condemned Springfield rifles to Villa's army, suddenly remembered that when a boy he had fed several iron washers into a peanut-vending machine instead of pennies, and was stricken with a desire to make contribution to the conscience fund. Accordingly he wrote a full confession to Professor Hamilton and sent him \$500, with instructions to use it in any way that he, the Professor, thought might aid in securing forgiveness for the rich old gentleman's past sins. The Professor decided after consultation with the school board that it would be a good thing to offer a prize for an automobile race, to be run by the boys of the grades. The stipulation was that each boy should own, rent or borrow a car and drive it himself, and make by himself such repairs as might be necessary along the road. The idea being that the race

A Five-Hundred-Dollar Race

would teach the boys the lesson of trying to get ahead in the world and keep ahead in the world, and give them practical experience in work, the rudiments of which they had been taught in the Manual Training Department.

The start was to be at the crossing of Carthage Avenue with Fowler Avenue, thence east to Lakeview, north to Fowler, west to Spring Lake, north and west to Jo-Ash, then on to Helvetia, south to Plains, from Plains to Atwater, then across the country to Uneda, from there to Touzalin, and from thence to the place of beginning. The cars were to start five minutes apart, and the one making the best time for the whole race should be awarded the \$500.

There were seven entries all told, but in order to qualify all who desired to make the race it was necessary to change the rules somewhat.

Bob Hazel was the first to start, having borrowed Ed Green's Ford runabout the night before, after Ed had gone to bed. Next was Harold Armstrong, who had found McKay & Cooper's delivery car standing unattended and took up with it. Then came Evan Hoon with a white Buick; I never learned where he got it, but it was thought that he picked it out of the pile of junk in the rear of Van Giesen's blacksmith shop.

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I followed in Moses Black's Brush, which I had borrowed for the occasion. Mr. Black's back was turned when I got it, and as he was busy telling a story, I did not bother to interrupt him to ask him about it, knowing that I would be back by the time he got the story finished and wanted his car.*

And then the rules had to be changed. Fred Holderman had been unable to get a car; but he found Jim Byrns' motorcycle leaning against the corral fence, and as Jim was busy milking and had no immediate use for the wheel, Fred thought it would do; and so the rules were expanded to permit Fred to enter. George Gray then insisted that if Fred could enter with a motorcycle he should be allowed to use his father's plow-engine, and consent was given. Just at this time Fenton Brannon appeared on his pony and demanded to enter, and so the rules were again stretched, and he was off. Those were the most elastic rules I ever saw.

The little Brush that Mr. Black had so kindly loaned me worked splendidly at first, and I passed Armstrong before we got out of town, as his car would stop at every house, no doubt under the impression that the driver was delivering groceries. Just at the top of the hill east of town I passed

* Moses Black is the County Surveyor, and a noted story-teller.

A Five-Hundred-Dollar Race

Hazel, as his car had shied at the cemetery and circled off into Boyle's pasture, and I got along fine until I was out about four miles, when, at a cross-roads, the car came to a dead stop, and in a few minutes Holderman popped by on his wheel. I looked the Brush over and adjusted all the thing-a-ma-jigs that I could find, but there was nothing doing; the engine had gone dead, and I could not start it. I wasted considerable time here, and George finally came along with his engine. He explained that he would have passed me much sooner, but when he arrived at the bridge across Crooked Creek he found that he would have to go back to town and get some planks to plank the bridge before he would be allowed to cross, and this took considerable time. As the heavy engine passed by, it tore up the ground and showed a stone half buried in the center of the road. As soon as this stone showed up, I started the Brush without trouble, and learned that it was only waiting until I found the missing corner-stone.

I passed Lakeview at a speed of fully ten miles an hour, throwing out my time-card to S. M. Bennett, who was the timekeeper at that point, and headed straight for Fowler, soon passing Gray, whose engine had turned into a field that needed

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plowing badly. Looking back, I saw Hazel approaching me; but just before reaching Fowler we passed another cemetery, and Hazel's Ford again took out across the prairie.

I was the first to enter Fowler. My carburetor was working badly by this time, and my speed through Fowler was much less than when I passed Lakeview, which permitted the City Marshal to overtake and arrest me, and I was taken before Judge Watt, charged with exceeding the speed limit. The Judge was talking politics at the time, so he merely took my number and asked me to call again.

I made the run from Fowler to Spring Lake, five miles, in less than an hour, and there I found Holderman's cycle leaning against the fence, and Brannon's pony grazing alfalfa, while Fred and Fenton were lying in the shade eating a mince pie they had mooched somewhere. I did not stop, even hesitate, but headed straight for Jo-Ash as fast as gasoline could take me. Just as I reached Jo-Ash my car stopped again and I found that I had run out of gas, and I wished Mr. Black was along. There was no gasoline to be had here, and I was wondering how far it was to the nearest phone when I saw Gray's engine coming. I waited until he caught up, and he was kind enough

A Five-Hundred-Dollar Race

to loan me sufficient gas to fill my tank, and we started on to Mertilla, a good lead over the others. Nothing important occurred until I reached Plains, and there I found Fenton and Fred ahead of me. I am sure they cut across the country, but they claimed to have thrown out their cards both at Jo-Ash and Mertilla, but it is rather curious that neither of these cards were found by the timekeepers. I stopped long enough in Plains to refill my tank and radiator, and then raced south, but just as I crossed the railroad track something scooted by me, and I saw by the number it was Hazel's Ford. Just east of Plains on the route marked out is another cemetery, and here, as I suspected it would be, the Ford left the road and tried to climb a telephone pole, which gave me a chance to gain on it, and pass it. And then came a straight drive of a dozen miles over the splendid county road built under the direction of X. I. Roberts, Jr., at a cost of \$5000, and I flew along at the rate of eight miles an hour. I reached Atwater, threw my card to Jake Kolb, and was off with the wind, but I had not gone far when I met with some real trouble. Gray was puffing along a mile or two behind me and his engine had set fire to the grass. The wind was blowing from the north and the fire was going faster than

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I was. Then Holderman came scorching along and set fire to the grass in front of me, and I was then almost surrounded by fire, and my engine had quit firing. While in this situation, all the others came up and passed me one by one, except Hoon. I learned afterwards that Hoon had been persuaded to quit the race to umpire a game of ball between Rainbelt and Carthage. It seems that as Armstrong got out of town and into the thinly settled country he made better time, as his car would always stop in front of a house, and he could make no headway where houses were plentiful.

I finally got my engine to working again, but not until I had looked around and found what appeared to be a corner-stone. The fire had now passed and there was no danger from that. In a little while I passed Armstrong, who had stopped to repair a blowout, Holderman who had run out of gas, and Fenton who had stopped to let his pony graze sagebrush. A mile further on I met Hazel coming to meet me on foot, who explained that he had lost a wheel somewhere and was going back to look for it. I soon passed his car, and did not see it again until after the race was over. The country between Atwater and Uneda is quite rough, the ruts worn deep, and presently

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I got hung up on a high center, from which I could not move myself, and would no doubt have been there yet had not Gray come up behind me and butted me over.

I led into Uneda and headed for Touzalin, at which place I arrived ahead of everyone. My engine was quite hot by this time and I stopped to let it cool and to fill my radiator; but there was no water to be had in the town; and while I was waiting Fenton and Holderman went by. Holderman, being out of gas, was holding on to Fenton's pony's tail and being towed right along. I saw I was losing too much time, so I poured a bucket of milk, which Mrs. Frieson gave me, into the radiator and proceeded. It was a hard race into Meade. We crossed the bridge at the same time, side by side we approached and entered the town of Meade, and the race would probably have been a tie between us, but in front of McGuire's the pony stopped to eat a banana peel, and I crossed the line a half block ahead of my nearest opponent, just as the crowd commenced to laugh at Mr. Black's story, and was adjudged the winner of the race and of the \$500. Imagine my surprise when I found the milk in the radiator had been churned; and I took out four pounds of butter, which I sold to Braden for \$1.20.

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In a neat and impressive speech Prof. Hamilton awarded the prize ; and just as I reached my eager hands to receive it, Miss Jones brought her ruler down across my shoulders and rudely awakened me from a pleasant dream.

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